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ABSTRACT

This guide supports Head Start's efforts to improve long-term school success and continue comprehensive services for children by ensuring their effective transitions to different settings. The guide is divided into two sections, one on skill-based training and one on information resources. The skill-based training section includes three training modules. Module 1 focuses on transition and change, and helps participants develop skills in identifying and developing the supports that children and families need during transition. Module 2 focuses on transition and continuity, and helps participants develop skills in working as part of a team to provide ongoing services, support, and developmentally appropriate learning experiences. Module 3 focuses on partnerships for continuity, and helps participants develop skills to plan, implement, and evaluate transition practices and policies collaboratively with parents and key community partners. The guide's information resources section contains four types of documents: digests, summarizing fundamental information on the topics of transition, change, continuity and support; program profiles, providing descriptions of transition programs from within and outside of Head Start; hands-on activities, offering examples of concrete transition activities for individuals to try in their own home or program; and 30 resources, including books, journal articles, and videotapes. (SD)

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HEAD START®

ED 407 143

Training Guides for the Head Start Learning Community

Effective Transition Practices: Facilitating Continuity

PS 025376

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES
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Administration on Children, Youth and Families
Head Start Bureau

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HEAD START®

Effective Transition Practices: Facilitating Continuity

Training Guides for the Head Start Learning Community

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES
Administration for Children and Families
Administration on Children, Youth and Families
Head Start Bureau

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Invitation

To Embark on a Journey

Please join members of our early childhood community
as we discover new transition strategies and
promising practices for young children and families.

◆

What to bring:

Experiences with children, families, and change
Stories of your own transitions
Symbol of personal support (stuffed animal, photograph, quotation, etc.)
Journey bag (backpack, tote, duffle bag, etc.)

Journey points along the way:

Introduction to the Journey
Transition and Change
Transition and Continuity
Partnerships for Continuity

◆

We look forward to traveling with you as we consider transition issues and engage in interactive workshops. In this personal and professional journey, you can expect to learn new ways to prepare children and their families for transition and change. At each journey point, you will collect valuable resources from programs nationwide. This training will help you navigate the changing waters of transition. We hope you will accept this invitation.

Bon Voyage!

Where: ______________________

When: ______________________

Preface

The image of children and their families sailing smoothly through transitions from birth through age eight captures a Head Start vision of continuous development and progress. A child's success in school can be linked, in part, to effective transition practices and activities. When new information and the collective support of a community continue to be accessible to families, they are better prepared to navigate their journey through transitions, adapt to change, and move forward.

In many communities, however, Head Start, elementary schools, and other early childhood programs and child care providers function in isolation from each other with little or no coordination. When this occurs, the transition of a child from one setting to a new one can result in discontinuity, jeopardizing the long-term benefits of a child's quality early experiences.

With limited resources and an increase in the complexity of problems facing children and families today, no one staff member or single agency can ensure continuity. Everyone has a stake in providing families and children with high quality programs and services throughout early childhood. Developing effective transition practices to facilitate continuity is everyone's job. Therefore, this foundation guide is for all Head Start staff—all of whom are already heavily invested in the continued progress and promise of the children and families they serve.

This guide will be useful for those programs that have just initiated transition activities, as well as those that have longstanding efforts. As a manager, you can support the process of continuous quality improvement by incorporating this transition training material into your staff development program. You can adapt the activities to meet your program needs.

This foundation guide will chart the course for a broader understanding of the elements of effective transition and the role of individual staff in facilitating continuity. Future transition guides will build upon the skills developed in this guide.

Your transition efforts will be most successful if you involve parents and other key players from the broader early childhood community. Initiate a relationship; create a partnership; or invite staff from a local school, preschool, or child care facility to participate with you and your staff in a joint training session. This collaborative approach could shift the perspective from turf issues and barriers to charting a course for successfully moving forward.

Introduction

Overview

Effective Transition Practices: Facilitating Continuity is the first in a series of transition training guides.

Purpose

This guide supports Head Start's efforts to improve long-term school success and continue comprehensive services for children by ensuring their effective transitions to different settings from birth through age eight.

Outcomes

After completing this training, participants will meet the following guide outcomes:

- Identify elements and requirements of effective transition practices
- Support children and families preparing for and experiencing transition
- Develop transition practices to facilitate continuity between settings

Audience

This foundation guide is written for all Head Start staff and families. It supports their efforts to ensure smooth transitions for young children and their parents. In addition to the Head Start family, this guide is also a vehicle for each Head Start grantee to extend an invitation to other members of their local early childhood community, such as elementary school, preschool, child care, and health and social services staff.

Key Terms

Providing **high quality** early childhood experiences is a common goal shared by early childhood staff. Quality experiences occur in a variety of care and education settings—home, school, family day care, child care centers, Head Start center-based and home-based programs, preschools, and elementary schools. As children develop from birth throughout childhood they move, or **transition**, from one learning environment or **setting** to a new one. Often, these transitions involve a process of **change** that requires a period of adjustment for the child and family.

To help these families adapt to change, staff need to provide as much **continuity** of education, care, and services as possible. This is accomplished when staff from the old setting (**senders**) and new setting (**receivers**) work together. Therefore, future experiences of children build upon previous experiences and supports to families remain available.

Introduction

Programs facilitate continuity when they implement these **effective transition practices**:

- Provide ongoing transition activities that support families and children
- Share information among key partners
- Develop communitywide supports through collaborative planning

Performance Standards

The Head Start Program Performance Standards require that grantees establish and maintain procedures to support successful transitions for enrolled children and families from previous child development programs or homes into Head Start and from Head Start into elementary schools or child care settings. This process includes:

- Coordinating the transfer of records with schools, other agencies, and parents
- Encouraging communication among Head Start staff and their counterparts in schools, other child development programs, and agencies, as well as parents, to facilitate continuity of programming
- Initiating meetings involving parents, kindergarten or elementary school teachers, other child care staff, and Head Start teachers
- Initiating joint transition-related training of school or other child care staff and Head Start staff

Organization

This foundation guide is divided into two sections: **Skill-Based Training** and **Informational Resources**.

The **Skill-Based Training** section includes three training modules. Since they build upon each other, they are most effective when used in sequence. This section of the guide makes reference to materials found in the **Informational Resources** section, but the usefulness of these materials extends beyond this guide. Before beginning any module, trainers should conduct the *Introductory Activity: Beginning the Journey*, found at the end of the Introduction.

Introductory Activity: *Beginning the Journey* helps participants understand the importance of providing external support during transitions. Participants identify their program's current activities that provide a foundation for developing effective transition practices. Participants also receive the *Journey Bag* and *Pocket Guides* that are used throughout the training modules.

Skill-Based Training Section

Module 1: ***Transition and Change*** helps participants understand that transition is an ongoing process of adapting to change that involves these stages: letting go, uncertainty, and taking hold. Participants develop skills in identifying and developing the supports that children and families need during transition. In addition, participants develop appropriate expectations based on the individual and developmental needs of children in transition.

Module 2: ***Transition and Continuity*** helps participants understand the importance of sharing information with key partners to facilitate continuity during transitions. Participants develop skills in working as part of a team to provide ongoing services, supports, and developmentally appropriate learning experiences.

Module 3: ***Partnerships for Continuity*** helps participants identify common goals of families and the early childhood community and helps them appreciate the skills and resources that each contribute. Participants begin to develop skills to plan, implement, and evaluate transition practices and policies collaboratively with parents and key community partners.

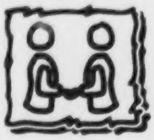
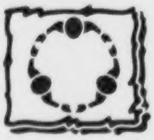
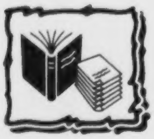
Informational Resources Section

The **Informational Resources** section contains several important documents that will enhance your understanding of the major concepts discussed in this guide. This section contains four types of documents and suggestions on how to use them.

- **Digests:** Summarize fundamental information on the topics of transition, change, continuity, and support. The brief articles reflect current research and express a consensus of expert views on transition issues.
- **Program Profiles:** Provide descriptions of transition programs from within and outside of Head Start. The examples reflect the diverse nature of programs throughout the country.
- **Hands-on Activities:** Offer examples of concrete transition activities for individuals to try in their own home or program.
- **Resources:** List additional resource materials, including books, journal articles, videotapes, and other documents.

Introduction

Definition of Icons

Coaching		A training strategy that fosters the development of skills through tailored instruction, demonstrations, practice, and feedback. The activities are written for a coach to work closely with one to three participants.
Workshop		A facilitated group training strategy that fosters the development of skills through activities that build on learning through group interaction. These activities are written for up to twenty-five participants working in small or large groups with one or two trainers.
Next Steps: *Ideas to Extend Practice*		These are additional activities assigned by the trainer immediately following the completion of the module to help participants review key information, practice skills, and examine their progress toward expected outcomes of the module.
Continuing *Professional Development*		These are follow-up activities for the program to support continued staff development in the regular use of the skills addressed in a particular training guide. The activities include: (1) Opportunities for the participant to continue building on the skills learned in the training (2) Ways to identify new skills and knowledge needed to expand and/or complement these skills through opportunities in such areas as higher education, credentialing, or community educational programs

At A Glance

Module	Activity	Time	Materials and Resources
Introduction	Introductory Activity: Beginning the Journey (W)	60–90 minutes	*Invitation to Embark on a Journey* *Journey Bag, Pocket Guides 1, 2, and 3* **Digest: A Child's Emerging Coping Abilities* Personal object Pocket folders
Module 1: Transition and Change	Activity 1–1: The Change Process (W)	45–60 minutes	*Handout 1: The Process of Adapting to Change* *Handout 2: Timeline for Adapting to Change* *Journey Bag, Pocket Guide 1* Newsprint, markers
	Activity 1–2: Family Changes (C)	Two 30–60 minute sessions	*Handout 1: The Process of Adapting to Change* *Handout 3: Children and Change* *Journey Bag, Pocket Guide 1*
	Activity 1–3: Pass the Baton (W)	60–90 minutes	*Handout 4: Addressing Change* *Handout 5: Involving All Staff* *Journey Bag, Pocket Guide 1* Masking tape, paper towel roll

* = Refer to Informational Resources Section
W = Workshop Activities C = Coaching Activities

Module	Activity	Time	Materials and Resources
Module 1: Transition and Change (Continued)	Activity 1–4: Developmental Spiral (W)	90–120 minutes	*Handout 6: Developmental Spiral* *Handout 7: Expectations and Supports That Match Developmental Needs* **Digest: A Child's Emerging Coping Abilities* *Journey Bag, Pocket Guide 1* Newsprint, markers, scissors
	Activity 1–5: Going to Kindergarten (W)	90–120 minutes	*Handout 8: Scenes of Support* *Handout 9: Strategies for Offering Support: Preschoolers/Kindergartners* *Handout 10: Expectations and Supports That Match Individual Needs* **Digest: Transition to Kindergarten* **Hands-on Activities: Sample Transition Activities* *Journey Bag, Pocket Guide 1* Preschool props Newsprint, markers
	Activity 1–6: Bringing It All Together (C)	Two 30–60 minute sessions	*Handout 5: Involving All Staff* *Handout 10: Expectations and Supports That Match Individual Needs* *Handout 11: Bringing It All Together* *Journey Bag, Pocket Guide 1*

* = Refer to Informational Resources Section
W = Workshop Activities   C = Coaching Activities

Module	Activity	Time	Materials and Resources
Module 2: Transition and Continuity	Activity 2–1: Setting Sail (W)	90–120 minutes	*Handout 12: Sharing Information* *Handout 13: Scenarios* *Handout 14: Senders and Receivers* **Digest: Beyond Transition: Ensuring Continuity in Early Childhood Services* *Journey Bag, Pocket Guide 2* Newsprint, markers
	Activity 2–2: Partner Meeting (W)	45–60 minutes	*Handout 15: Transition Issues* *Journey Bag, Pocket Guide 2* Notepaper
	Activity 2–3: Sender and Receiver Roles (C)	Two 30–60 minute sessions	*Handout 12: Sharing Information* *Handout 16: Kendra's Story* **Digest: Continuity of Care and the Importance of Relationships* *Journey Bag, Pocket Guide 2*
	Activity 2–4: Setting Characteristics (W)	60–90 minutes	*Handout 17: Settings and Continuity* **Hands-on Activities* *Journey Bag, Pocket Guide 2* Newsprint, markers

* = Refer to Informational Resources Section
W = Workshop Activities   C = Coaching Activities

Module	Activity	Time	Materials and Resources
Module 2: Transition and Continuity (Continued)	Activity 2–5: Preparing the Child and Family (C)	Three 30–60 minute sessions	*Handout 17: Settings and Continuity* **Hands-on Activities* *Journey Bag, Pocket Guide 2*
Module 3: Partnerships for Continuity	Activity 3–1: Common Ground (W)	90–120 minutes	*Journey Bag, Pocket Guide 3* Newsprint
	Activity 3–2: Find a Partner (C)	Three 20–40 minute sessions	**Program Profiles* *Journey Bag, Pocket Guide 3*
	Activity 3–3: Collaborative Potluck (W)	60–90 minutes	*Handout 18: Invitation to a Collaborative Potluck Dinner* *Handout 19: Recipe for Collaborative Cake* *Handout 20: Collaborating for Quality* *Journey Bag, Pocket Guide 3* Paper plates, art materials
	Activity 3–4: Adapting Promising Practices (C)	Two 30–60 minute sessions	**Program Profiles* *Journey Bag, Pocket Guide 3*
	Activity 3–5: What's in Your Journey Bag? (C)	45–60 minutes	*Journey Bag, Pocket Guides*

* = Refer to Informational Resources Section
W = Workshop Activities C = Coaching Activities

Introductory Activity: Beginning the Journey

Purpose: In this activity, participants identify individual and program experiences that provide a foundation for building effective transition practices.

Materials:

Invitation to Embark on a Journey
Journey Bag, Pocket Guides 1, 2, and *3*
Digest: A Child's Emerging Coping Abilities (Informational Resources)
Personal object
Pocket folder for each participant

Trainer Preparation Notes:

By conducting this activity first, you introduce participants to effective transition practices and identify which practices are being implemented in their programs. This information will help you determine where to begin the training journey. Some participants will benefit most if you begin the training with Module 1 and work toward completing the full journey (Modules 1, 2, and 3). Others may need specific skills or information to help them improve their program practices. A shorter journey can begin with Module 2 or 3 and be tailored to meet the needs of participants.

Before the workshop, send an invitation to participants such as the *Invitation to Embark on a Journey* found in the Preface, or personally invite participants to the training. Ask them to bring a *journey bag* and a *personal object* that represents support that they received during a significant life change or transition. The item can be a photograph, a quote from an inspirational book, a stuffed animal from childhood, or any other symbol. Plan to bring your own personal item.

Find the *Journey Bag* graphic and three *Pocket Guides* at the end of this activity. You will distribute these journey materials during this activity and refer participants to them in each workshop and coaching activity in the guide. Either organize the materials ahead of time or have participants organize their materials by attaching the *Journey Bag* graphic to the cover of a pocket folder. Then fold the three *Pocket Guides* along the dotted lines and insert them into the *Journey Bag* folder.

Introduction

Background Information

Effective transition practices are based on understanding that transition is a process, not a single event. Staff often plan an isolated event, such as an orientation day, to prepare children for a transition. However, one visit to a program does not prepare children and families for the new setting. In order to increase staff awareness of the process of transition, it is helpful to use a journey metaphor.

Journey Metaphor

Each transition is like a journey that takes time, preparation, and planning. Like a journey, the transition to a new setting offers children and families new opportunities. To benefit from these experiences, children and families need information and resources available before, during, and after they reach their destination.

Children are inexperienced adventurers and do not know what to expect in a new setting. They depend on their parents to guide them and provide ongoing support at each stage of a journey or each stage of a transition. Just as travelers often get lost or confused by unfamiliar places and customs, children and families are often unsure what is expected and where to find help. Like travelers who seek information and assistance from those familiar with the surroundings, children and families look for staff in new programs to assist them. Like any traveler, families and children cope better when they are welcomed into the new environment and find the help they need.

Staff from the old setting can help prepare families for new programs by assisting them in making individualized transition plans and by sharing information about the new setting. These staff can also help prepare those in the new setting for the new families. As information about the family priorities is shared, staff in the new setting can individualize their program to provide necessary supports. Preparing all involved in the transition helps children and families benefit from the new experiences.

Effective Transition Practices

Participants will be asked to envision the workshop and coaching sessions as a journey toward effective transition practices. As they collect information, identify strategies for improving practices, and engage in new activities, they move closer to their destinations—effective transition practices. Each module offers a different journey and helps participants develop skills and identify new strategies that lead toward effective practices. The journey destinations for each module can be summarized as follows:

- The destinations for *Module 1: Transition and Change* are transition practices that support the family and assist the child in transitioning to the next environment.
- The destinations for *Module 2: Transition and Continuity* are transition practices that provide ongoing services, supports, and developmentally

appropriate learning experiences for children and families after leaving the program.

- The destinations for *Module 3: Partnerships for Continuity* are transition practices that encourage community partners to work together to maximize strengths and resources of the community.

Describe the Journey

1. Welcome participants to the journey toward effective transition practices. Use the information from the Background section to explain how transition is like a journey. Then discuss how the training is also like a journey.

Sharing Stories

2. Point out that each participant begins the journey with a personal perspective and understanding of transition. By sharing their personal object and its story, workshop participants will begin to understand the many different ways to support families and children in transition. Show participants the object that you brought to the workshop and explain how the object represents support you received during a transition. Then ask participants to share their personal object and transition stories.

Internal and External Supports

3. Point out that each participant brought an object and story that tells about an **internal** or an **external** support. Explain that internal supports are personal characteristics, skills, beliefs, and values. External supports refer to people, activities, and environments. Help the group identify their personal supports as internal or external ones. Then ask:

    - How do you think the supports identified as internal ones relate to external ones? (For example, was a belief in yourself developed because someone else believed in you?)
    - What internal supports might young children have?
    - What role does the family have in helping children develop internal supports?

Relate Coping to Supports

4. Summarize the information contained in the *Digest: A Child's Emerging Coping Abilities,* located in the **Informational Resources** section, to explain how families help children develop internal supports.

Effective Transition Practices

5. Distribute the *Journey Bag* folder and explain that participants can organize the information collected throughout the training in this *Journey Bag*. Refer them to the three *Pocket Guides*. Explain that each one represents a different journey through a training module. Discuss the effective transition practices listed as destinations in the first

column of each guide. Ask participants to list current practices under *starting points* and to highlight those destinations they would like to reach.

Assess Current Practices

6. Review and assess the practices that participants identified in their *Pocket Guides*. Help them choose a journey that will take them from where they are to where they want to be. Be sure to consider expanding the effectiveness of the training by inviting staff from other programs and agencies to participate in the sessions. You can use the following guidelines to tailor the training.

   - Participants whose current practices listed in *Pocket Guide 1* indicate that transition efforts focus on one-time events and involve few staff members would benefit from the full journey beginning with Module 1 workshop and coaching activities.
   - Participants who listed more effective practices in *Pocket Guide 1*, but had few practices listed on *Pocket Guide 2*, would benefit if they began their journey with Module 1 or 2 workshop and coaching activities.
   - Participants who listed some effective practices for both *Pocket Guides 1* and *2* would benefit if they began their journey with Module 1, 2, or 3 workshop and coaching activities.
   - Participants with some effective practices listed in each *Pocket Guide* would benefit from any journey, especially if it were conducted as joint training with other program staff.

Journey Point

You have now reached your first *Journey Point*, as indicated by the backpack icon. Explain to participants that at each subsequent *Journey Point*, they will list strategies that will help them improve their practices and build on their experience. Have them personalize the *Pocket Guide* for the chosen journey by labeling and illustrating their destination on the cover.

Journey Bag

Transition is a journey. . .

NOTES:

DISCOVERIES:

POCKET GUIDE 1

Transition & Change

Preparing for Change

Sharing Information

Continuity of Services

Partnering

JOURNEY 1: *Transition & Change*

DESTINATION: *This journey leads toward effective transition practices that support children and families in transitioning to the new environment.*	**STARTING POINTS:** *List what you are doing now to support children and families in transitioning to the new environment.*	**STRATEGIES TO REACH DESTINATION:** *At each Journey Point list new strategies that you can use to make your current transition practices more effective.*
Procedures for registration and withdrawal address each stage of the change process, the individual needs of each child, and the developmental stage of children served.	Current transition procedures:	Strategies for addressing needs with new transition procedures:
All staff are involved in preparing children and families for new settings and in providing a welcoming environment to those entering the program.	Current staff involvement and support:	Strategies for increasing staff involvement and support:
Transition program events and other initiatives are scheduled year round to support children and families in the process of transitioning into and out of the program.	Current transition initiatives:	Strategies for offering new transition initiatives:

NOTES:

DISCOVERIES:

POCKET GUIDE 2

Transition & Continuity

Preparing for Change

Sharing Information

Continuity of Services

Partnering

JOURNEY 2: *Transition & Continuity*

DESTINATION: *This journey leads toward effective transition practices that provide for ongoing services, supports, and developmentally appropriate experiences.*	**STARTING POINTS:** *List what you are doing now to provide for ongoing services, supports, and developmentally appropriate experiences.*	**STRATEGIES TO REACH DESTINATION:** *At each Journey Point list new strategies that you can use to make your current transition practices more effective.*
Information is shared among key partners to identify transition needs and develop strategies for meeting these needs.	Current methods for sharing information:	Strategies for sharing information with key partners:
Senders and receivers coordinate transition planning to ensure the continuation of quality programs and services.	Current methods for coordinating transition planning:	Strategies for coordinating efforts to continue services and developmentally appropriate practices:
Efforts are made by both senders and receivers to prepare families and children for the differences between settings and to introduce new experiences gradually.	Current efforts to address differences among settings:	Strategies for maximizing similarities and minimizing differences among settings:

NOTES:

DISCOVERIES:

POCKET GUIDE 3

Partnerships for Continuity

Preparing for Change

Sharing Information

Continuity of Services

Partnering

JOURNEY 3: *Partnerships for Continuity*

DESTINATION: *This journey leads toward effective transition practices that encourage community partners to work together to maximize the strengths and resources of the community.*	**STARTING POINTS:** *List what you are doing now to establish partnerships and work collaboratively for children and families.*	**STRATEGIES TO REACH DESTINATION:** *At each Journey Point list new strategies that you can use to make your current transition practices more effective.*
Members of the early childhood community are strongly connected, support each other's efforts, and work together.	Current networking practices:	Strategies for networking and strengthening community partnerships:
Key partners pool their skills and resources to provide continuity of services.	Current collaborative transition efforts:	Strategies for collaborating:

Skill-Based Training Modules

Module 1

Transition and Change

Outcomes

As a result of completing this module, participants will be able to:

- Evaluate the impact of transitions on individuals and how they are helped by various internal and external supports
- Identify the stages of the change process experienced during transitions and the factors that influence the ability to cope with change
- Develop effective transition practices to address the individual and developmental needs of children and families who are adapting to expected and unexpected changes in routines, roles, environments, and relationships
- Develop strategies to involve all staff in continuously supporting children and families as they experience transition

Key Concepts

- When children and families transition from one setting to another, they inevitably encounter change, which requires them to adapt their thoughts, feelings, and behaviors to meet the new expectations.
- While everyone experiences the process of adapting to change differently, common stages of the process include:
  - Letting go
  - Uncertainty
  - Taking hold
- Knowing how transition affects you can provide a basis for understanding the internal change process. Helping children and families who may experience the process differently requires shifting the perspective away from yourself.
- Team transition planning involves all staff and parents in developing comprehensive strategies to provide support, information, and continuity of experience to families and children. Program strategies should include a wide range of practices to address transition throughout the year.
- Parents provide stability for children and can facilitate continuity when they are included in the transition process.

Background Information

All cultures acknowledge major life events such as births, coming of age, marriage, and death with rituals, ceremonies, and celebrations. These rites of passage mark the end of one stage of life and the beginning of another. However, development does not happen abruptly. Through continuous growth and experience, children mature at their individual rates. They do not instantly become adults at age eighteen, nor do they instantly become ready for an academic environment at age five or six. Instead, **developmental transitions** occur over time as children are cared for in nurturing environments that meet their individual needs. Gradually their ability to adapt to changing expectations increases as they develop.

Supporting Children and Families

Ideally, children would move to new early childhood settings only during periods of developmental stability. In reality, **transitions between early childhood settings** do not always coincide with a child's individual developmental needs. Change occurs because of many reasons. Some programs, like traditional Head Start, serve children for a limited time. Other programs, like family day care, may be available for longer periods but often have changes in enrollment due to family circumstances.

Children cope with transitions differently depending on internal supports, individual developmental needs, and the amount of resources available to the family. **Internal supports** include the temperament a child is born with and other unique characteristics and abilities that develop as the child grows. Each of these factors affects how much external support is needed to ease transitions for both child and family. **External supports** are the people, activities, and environments that help children accomplish developmental tasks and cope with change and stress. Comprehensive strategies and involvement of all staff and parents in ongoing transition practices increase the likelihood that program supports will help ease both planned and unplanned transitions.

Process of Adapting to Change

Throughout early childhood, both children and their parents experience transition as a **process of adapting to change**. This process occurs as children and parents adapt their thoughts, feelings, and behavior to prepare for and cope with multiple changes. Not only is the environment different, but the caregivers are new, the routines may be different, and program policies vary. These changes in setting create both subtle and abrupt changes in expectations. For example, the child accustomed to napping in her own crib may suddenly be faced with sleeping on a cot in a large classroom. An older child who has been encouraged to explore learning centers finds he is expected to sit quietly and complete academic exercises. Parents who have been responsible for meeting their child's special needs must develop advocacy skills to ensure that the needs continue to be met in the new setting.

When adults understand the change process from a personal perspective, they can appreciate the need for supports that children have during transition. Even adults, who have acquired more internal resources, often need outside support to **let go** of old patterns of behavior and **take hold** of new roles. As individuals look for ways to accomplish these two tasks, they struggle through a stage of **uncertainty**, not knowing exactly how to maintain their sense of self as they change. Although each person experiences the change process differently, there are three common stages of the process, which are characterized by specific thoughts, behaviors, and feelings.

Letting Go

Whether planned or unplanned, a transition affects relationships. Feelings of sadness and resistance to change occur as individuals experience the *letting go* stage of the change process. When individuals experience changes in their lives, they need to acknowledge what they are losing—whether it is an attachment to people, roles, or settings. They also need to celebrate what they have gained. Rites of passage during developmental transitions provide individuals with a formal acknowledgment of their accomplishment and symbolic support as they meet new challenges. Similarly, ending ceremonies and celebrations such as retirement parties serve this purpose during personal transitions. Formal celebrations are not the only way to mark transitions. Regular ongoing activities such as making scrapbooks, taking photographs, or making mementos of who or what you are leaving all offer individuals a way to celebrate the past.

Uncertainty

Transition can cause fears, concerns, and mixed feelings. Transition creates confusion and makes it difficult for people to act on their own during the *uncertainty* stage. It is a time when people need extra encouragement and support. Individuals in this stage may have difficulty understanding the connection that their past experience has to the new one. Providing information and support during a change helps those affected to imagine how their skills will help them in a new role.

Because children are concrete learners, they gain information best by visiting a new setting or taking part in joint activities with older peers from the new setting. After the visit or activity, children can express their feelings by writing stories, drawing pictures, or discussing stories about transition. Conducting these follow-up activities with children helps adults understand children's feelings. An understanding adult can help the children by calming concerns.

Taking Hold

Taking hold of new thoughts, feelings, and actions allows individuals to change so they can meet new demands. This stage begins with the individuals in transition clarifying expectations—learning the rules, defining responsibilities, and knowing when they have done something right. Individuals in this stage are ready to change their behavior when they understand expectations. They express confidence and an appreciation for the personal growth that they gain by accepting new challenges. It is not easy to take hold of new expectations when they do not relate to past experiences. However, when individuals find that they are prepared for these new challenges, transitions become an opportunity for growth and development.

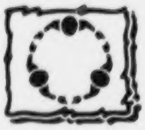
Effective Transition Practices

Effective transition practices address the needs of children and families even before they enter a program and continue after they leave the setting. Staff can provide continuous support at all stages of the change process. For example, celebrations help children in the *letting go* stage. Answering questions both formally and informally assists children and parents in the *uncertainty* stage. Setting up buddy systems for children and families who have left the setting helps create a welcoming atmosphere so important to the *taking hold* stage.

Journey Point

Throughout this document, participants are asked to think of the training as a journey toward effective transition practices. At the end of each workshop and coaching activity, there is a place to stop on this journey, or *Journey Point,* so that participants can organize their materials and thoughts. In this module, at each *Journey Point* the trainer refers participants to their *Journey Bag* and *Pocket Guide 1*. These tools, and a summary of the journey, are provided in the *Introductory Activity: Beginning the Journey*, on page 9.

Activity 1–1: The Change Process



Purpose: In this activity, participants will become familiar with the common stages of the change process that individuals experience during transitions.

Materials:

Handouts 1 and 2
Journey Bag, Pocket Guide 1 (Introduction)
Newsprint, markers

Explain the Stages of Change

1. Using examples from the Background Information section, discuss the relationship between transition and change. Define the stages in the change process.
   - **Letting go**—focusing on the old role or setting and celebrating where we have come from
   - **Uncertainty**—picturing and preparing for new possibilities
   - **Taking hold**—acquiring new roles and behaviors to adapt to the change

Distribute *Handout 1: The Process of Adapting to Change* and provide an overview of the thoughts, feelings, and behavior associated with each stage of the change process.

Create Personal Timelines

2. Ask participants to think about a personal transition experience and how they felt about the transition over an extended period of time. Then distribute *Handout 2: Timeline for Adapting to Change* and explain to participants how to use the handout to illustrate their personal process of adapting to change. Tell participants to label the stages in the order that they were experienced and shade in the number of months that each stage lasted.

Review Timelines

3. Illustrate several personal timelines on newsprint. Use samples from volunteers in the workshop or use several hypothetical timelines. Compare these samples and then ask participants:

   - When did you experience each stage of change?
   - How long did each stage last?
   - Were there any time periods when you experienced more than one stage or when feelings from an earlier stage reoccurred?

Discuss Behavior of Children

4. Have participants think about how children act when they are entering the program or preparing to leave. For example, some children cry easily, others cling to their caregiver, and some talk about friends that they will leave behind. Ask:

   - What feelings might children be experiencing when they behave in these ways?
   - What other ways have children in your program communicated that they are experiencing the process of adapting to change?
   - What strategies have you found to be successful in helping children during this time?

Review Individual Differences

5. Discuss individual differences in adapting to change. Make the following points:

   - Each child experiences the change process in a unique way.
   - Individual temperament, previous experiences, and the nature of the change affect how children act and feel during the process.
   - The amount of time and support it takes to meet individual needs at each stage of the change process varies.

Review Needs

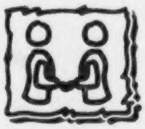
6. Refer participants to *Handout 1: The Process of Adapting to Change* and review the needs for each stage. Have them brainstorm ways to meet these needs of children and families in their program and list their ideas on newsprint. Summarize by making these points:

   - Each stage involves a need that can be addressed through effective transition practices.
   - Program events and procedures can support families and children throughout the change process.
   - Individual strategies are often required to meet the unique needs of children and families.

Journey Point

Suggest that participants put the handouts from the activity in their *Journey Bag*. Refer them to *Pocket Guide 1* to list strategies that address the needs of children and families experiencing change. Then ask them to share their ideas with a partner.

Activity 1–2: Family Changes



Purpose: In this activity, participants will evaluate the impact of family changes on children and investigate factors that influence children's ability to adapt to the changes.

Materials:
Handouts 1 and 3
Journey Bag, Pocket Guide 1 (Introduction)

Review the Change Process

1. Distribute *Handout 1: The Process of Adapting to Change* and review the stages of the process during the first coaching session.

Discuss Family Changes

2. Discuss family changes that participants feel have had an impact on children in their program. Some examples might include a parent moving out of the home, the birth of a sibling, or a change in the family income. Ask:

   - How do children behave when their families experience these changes?
   - What might the children's behavior tell us about their feelings and thoughts about the change?
   - How do these reactions compare to the reactions listed on *Handout 1: The Process of Adapting to Change*?

Complete Interviews

3. Ask participants to identify three children in their program whose families are experiencing one of the changes discussed. Give

participants a copy of *Handout 3: Children and Change* to complete for each child. Ask them to interview staff members who work closely with each child and family. Remind them that sensitivity is required when discussing confidential information. Participants who work directly with the children and families can include child and family observations and interviews as appropriate.

Compare Individual Experiences

4. Conduct a second coaching session to discuss and compare the individual experiences of these children. Point out the following factors that can influence how a child reacts to change: the child's age and developmental stage, the child's temperament, the support the child is receiving from family members and staff, and the child's individual needs. Questions to discuss include:

- What factors might be influencing both the reaction of the child and the strategies being used to assist the child?
- What strategies seem to be working with all the children?
- Do the children share any similar reactions? What reactions are different?

Develop a Plan

5. Work with participants to develop a plan for routinely identifying available supports to children. The plan will vary depending on the staff responsibilities. Some examples follow:

- Administrators might develop an intake form or interview format to use with families as children enter the program.
- Teachers might develop an activity that encourages children to express their supports through art or dramatic play.
- Home visitors might develop a record keeping system to document the family supports that they observe during home visits.

Journey Point

Suggest that participants put the handouts from the activity in their *Journey Bag*. Refer them to *Pocket Guide 1* to list new strategies for meeting the individual needs of children in transition. Have them share their ideas with someone outside the coaching session.

Activity 1–3: Pass the Baton

Purpose: In this activity, participants will develop strategies for all staff and parents to support families and children in the continuous cycle of transition.

Materials:

Handouts 4 and 5
Journey Bag, Pocket Guide 1 (Introduction)
Masking tape, paper towel roll

Trainer Preparation Notes:

While this activity addresses the transitions that occur in Head Start programs, it can easily be adapted for other settings that workshop participants may represent. Arrange the room so the center is free from chairs and tables. Use masking tape to create a large oval track on the floor with a designated starting point. Make a baton with a paper towel roll.

Discuss Program Year

1. Distribute *Handout 4: Addressing Change.* Ask participants to select transition practices on the handout that are helpful at the following times of the year:

    - Beginning of the program year
    - Middle of the program year
    - End of the program year

    Point out that many practices are useful at several points of the year because children and families are experiencing transition continuously.

Introduce Lap Concept

2. Ask participants to imagine Head Start families walking separate laps around a track at the beginning of the year when they enter the program, during the year as they experience personal transitions, and later as they prepare to transition to the next setting. Ask them to imagine staff members joining families on the track as a relay team that provides support.

    - The first staff person to meet the family walks with them for a time, carrying a baton of support.

    - When the staff team member is finished providing support, he passes the baton to another team member.

    - The relay continues as families walk each transition lap.

Role Play

3. Explain that the track around the room allows participants to practice working as part of a team that provides continuous support. Ask all staff who help families transition into the program and two volunteers to represent a parent and child entering the program to go to the track. Give the baton to the staff member who begins the process and have her walk with the family, acting out her role and describing the support she can provide to the family. Explain that in the **first lap**, the starting staff member passes the baton of support to another when she completes her role, and the process continues until all staff have acted out their roles.

Personal Transitions

4. Then ask the parent and child to begin the **second lap** without staff support. As they walk the lap, ask them to pretend that they are experiencing a personal transition that might occur *during* the child's enrollment in the Head Start program. Tell the parent and child that during the role play they can call on staff members to provide support. Give those staff the baton of support and have them join in the role play. Examples of personal transitions include birth of a sibling or change in the parents' employment.

Transitioning Out of Head Start

5. Call all staff members who transition families out of Head Start to walk a **third lap** in the same way that they did in the first lap. At the end of the lap, pass the baton to the parent, who will continue to support the child through all of life's transitions.

Small Group Discussions

6. Distribute *Handout 5: Involving All Staff*. Divide participants into three groups. Tell them to discuss how to improve their teamwork and involve more staff and parent volunteers in their transition team. Assign each group one of the following laps:

   - **Lap 1:** Transition into Head Start
   - **Lap 2:** Personal transitions during the year
   - **Lap 3:** Transition out of Head Start

Summarize Roles

7. Reconvene the entire group and ask each group to share their ideas. Point out that each team member needs to know his role in order to provide effective transitions throughout the year.

Journey Point

Suggest that participants put the handouts from the activity in their *Journey Bag*. Refer them to *Pocket Guide 1* to list new strategies for involving all staff in supporting families and children. Have them share their strategies with a partner.

Activity 1–4: Developmental Spiral

Purpose: In this activity, participants will identify children's emerging capacity to cope with change so staff can develop expectations and supports that match developmental needs.

Materials:

Handouts 6 and 7
Digest: A Child's Emerging Coping Abilities (Informational Resources)
Journey Bag, Pocket Guide 1 (Introduction)
Newsprint, markers, scissors

Discuss Children's Feelings

1. Remind participants that the change process is a universal one. Discuss how the feelings and needs of children experiencing a change in caregiver or setting can be very similar to those experienced by adults who move or change jobs. Use the following examples to explain how children are less able to understand, express, and control their feelings:

- A toddler in the *uncertainty* stage of the change process may be feeling anxious and insecure; she may cling to her mother, experience nightmares, or draw attention to herself by acting out or regressing.
- Older children in the *uncertainty* stage, who can express themselves, may share their anxious feelings by asking questions or telling their parent that a monster is after them.

Compare Adult and Child Supports

2. Tell the group that to begin to get a picture of the *internal supports* a child develops over time, we can think about supports adults rely on as they adapt to change. Some examples follow:

- Social skills, such as the ability to make friends easily, help adults when they are in new situations. Even though children throughout early childhood are developing social skills, at age seven or eight they still need adult guidance in order to share and get along with others.
- Personal beliefs, such as the belief that things will improve over time, help adults manage difficult times. Young children do not have enough understanding of time or experience to develop these strong beliefs.

Review Developmental Tasks

3. In early childhood, children are referred to as infants, toddlers, preschoolers, kindergartners, and primary school children based on their **developmental stage**. The child's developmental stage affects the kind of supports he needs. Such supports help young children accomplish certain **developmental tasks**, or the abilities common to the child's specific stage of development. For more information on child development, refer to the training guide *Enhancing Children's Growth and Development* in the series **Training Guides for the Head Start Learning Community**.

Summarize the child's developmental stages, needs, and tasks on newsprint as follows:

- *Infants* need nurturing and responsive care to develop a *sense of trust and security.*
- *Toddlers* need safe opportunities to do things for themselves to develop *independence.*
- *Preschoolers* need opportunities to express themselves with adults and peers to develop *communication and social skills.*
- *Kindergartners* need appropriate challenges to build their skills and develop a *sense of competency.*
- *Primary school children* need environments that foster acceptance and cooperation to develop a sense of *belonging to a peer group.*

Review Developmental Spiral

4. Distribute *Handout 6: Developmental Spiral.* Explain that child growth and development can be envisioned as a spiral. Tell participants that to help children and families, it is important to get a clear picture of how internal and external supports help children move through the spiral.

Create a Spiral of Support

5. Ask for a volunteer to stand in front of the group, representing the infant in the center of the spiral of Handout 6. Tell participants to think about how infants *develop trust and security.* Ask them to name external supports that meet the infant's need for nurturing care. Proceed as follows:

   - Have the first person who names a support link arms with the person representing the child.
   - As participants name other supports for meeting the infant's needs, have them continue to link arms and encircle the child like the spiral on the handout.
   - Once several supports are identified for this stage of development, tell the group to lead the child one step forward to move into the next stage of development.

- If they are experiencing difficulty moving to the next stage, point out that children do sometimes encounter difficulties as supports and expectations change during transition.

Continue the Spiral

6. Ask participants to continue the spiral outward by naming external supports that will help this child in the next stage of development. Refer to the *developmental tasks* and *needs* listed on newsprint. As you introduce each subsequent developmental stage, tell the group to take one step forward. Continue the line of supports as a spiral around the child. If the participants seem to be limiting their responses, you can suggest these examples:

    - A parent who provides a step stool for a toddler to wash her own hands supports her growing independence.
    - An older sibling helps a preschooler develop social skills by playing games with him.
    - Kindergarten teachers help new students know what they are capable of doing by displaying their work.
    - Recreation leaders help primary grade children learn to get along with peer groups when they organize club or sport activities for this age group.

Involve All Participants

7. Encourage any remaining participants to represent the external supports that meet children's needs associated with ongoing developmental tasks. These tasks include *developing a disposition to learn (enthusiasm), motor control, emotional control*, and *a sense of self*. If participants cannot think of any more supports, others can suggest some so that the remaining participants can represent them in the spiral.

Movement Activity

8. Now that everyone is part of the child's support system, ask participants to stay linked together as the child leads them through the room. Then thank all participants for their willingness to support the child as she moved through the developmental stages of early childhood and for continuing to hold onto the child when she took the lead.

Interpret the Spiral Activity

9. Demonstrate how *Handout 6: Developmental Spiral* can be cut along the line of the spiral to create a long curved line. Explain to participants that the spiral represents the flow of children's growth and development. Make these points:

    - Just as the support system expands gradually, so does the child's **coping capacity**—the ability to cope with change by relying on internal supports.

- Transitions might be seen as the kinks or turns in the spiral that occur when children are challenged to develop new capacities.

- By developing expectations and supports that match children's capabilities, we can help them transition more easily between settings.

Discuss Matching Expectations

10. Distribute *Handout 7: Expectations and Supports That Match Developmental Needs* and tell participants that appropriate transition expectations for young children are based on matching the child's developmental needs with appropriate supports. Review the ideas on the handout and summarize the information in *Digest: A Child's Emerging Coping Abilities*, located in the **Informational Resources** section.

Journey Point

Suggest that participants put the handouts from the activity in their *Journey Bag*. Refer them to *Pocket Guide 1* to list strategies that address the developmental needs of children. Then ask them to share their ideas with a partner.

Activity 1–5: Going to Kindergarten

Purpose: In this activity, participants identify effective strategies and initiatives to support children as they develop skills at their individual rates.

Materials:

Handouts 8, 9, and 10
Digest: Transition to Kindergarten (Informational Resources)
Hands-on Activities: Sample Transition Activities (Informational Resources)
Journey Bag, Pocket Guide 1 (Introduction)
Preschool props
Newsprint, markers

Trainer Preparation Notes:

This activity can be adapted for children experiencing transitions at other developmental levels. Refer to the *Hands-on Activities* in the **Informational Resources** section for strategies that assist children during each developmental stage of early childhood.

Suggested props for this activity are toys, books, music cassettes and cassette player, cafeteria-style trays, photographs of children in a classroom, baby pictures, telephone, paper, and markers.

Module 1

Introduction

1. Ask for a show of hands from the group to see how many participants have been involved in helping children or families in transition. Next, ask for a show of hands from the group to see how many participants have been involved in each of these transitions:

   - From home into their program
   - From any program to home (particularly for parents)
   - From their program to a child care provider before or after school
   - From one classroom to another classroom within their program
   - From their program to another school setting

List Transition Challenges

2. Make two columns on newsprint. Label one column *Challenging Behavior*. Ask participants to think about children who have not had easy transitions and to discuss the challenges that their behavior created for staff. As behaviors are identified, keep a running list on the newsprint.

Star Items on the List

3. Review the list of challenging behaviors with the group and mark a star next to difficulties resulting from a lack of social and communication skills. Examples may include:

   - Cries excessively
   - Is unable to share toys
   - Does not follow caregiver directions

Discuss Research Findings

4. Summarize the information in *Digest: Transition to Kindergarten*, located in the **Informational Resources** section as follows:

   - Communication and social skills are of primary importance when children transition to kindergarten.

   - These skills were identified by both parents and kindergarten teachers who were asked what skills children need to enter kindergarten.

   - Current research studies have identified social and communication skills as predictors of ongoing school success.

Small Group Planning

5. Explain that children with difficulties communicating and interacting with others can succeed when they receive extra support. Divide participants into small groups, and distribute one scene cut out from *Handout 8: Scenes of Support* to each group. Ask each group to develop a short skit using the props and specific strategy assigned on *Handout 9: Strategies for Offering Support: Preschoolers/Kindergartners*.

Act Out Scenes of Support

6. Choose one scene and ask the two groups assigned this scene to perform their skits. Ask the groups to report how they chose their activities. Repeat the same process for the other scenes. Then ask:

- What were the differences in the skills each child developed?
- What additional activities might support these children?
- Why might similar strategies help with different problems?

Refer participants to the *Hands-on Activities* located in the **Informational Resources** section and explain that *Sample Transition Activities: Preschoolers/Kindergartners*, *Sample Transition Activities: Infants and Toddlers*, and *Sample Transition Activities: Primary School Children* suggest strategies for each developmental level. Explain that for additional support, more individualized strategies and activities may need to be developed.

Apply Strategies to Challenge List

7. Refer the group back to the newsprint list of challenges in transition and particularly to the starred items. Label the second column *Strategies* and ask the group to choose overall strategies to address the needs of these children. Discuss their ideas and write them in the *Strategies* column.

Discuss Appropriate Expectations

8. Distribute *Handout 10: Expectations and Supports That Match Individual Needs*. Discuss why it is necessary to consider individual needs and strengths to develop appropriate expectations and strategies. For more information on identifying individual strengths and strategies for supporting resiliency, see *Promoting Mental Health*, one of the guides in the series **Training Guides for the Head Start Learning Community**.

Journey Point

Suggest that participants put the handouts from the activity in their *Journey Bag*. Refer them to *Pocket Guide 1* to list strategies for offering new transition initiatives. Then ask them to share their ideas with a partner.

Activity 1–6: Bringing It All Together

Purpose: In this activity, participants develop strategies that meet individual and developmental needs of children as they adapt to expected and unexpected changes.

Materials:

Handouts 5, 10, and 11
Journey Bag, Pocket Guide 1 (Introduction)

Coach Preparation Notes:

In preparation for this activity you can review the Background Information section and the previous activities in the module. Key terms to become familiar with include *internal supports, external supports, developmental stages, coping capacity*, and *transition.*

Review Concepts

1. During an initial coaching session, discuss the following concepts: *internal supports, external supports, developmental stages, coping capacity*, and *transition*. Find out how participants would define the terms and why they feel it is necessary to understand these concepts to effectively assist children in transition.

Discuss Children in Transition

2. Ask those in the session to identify one child who is preparing for or experiencing a transition. Help participants use *Handout 11: Bringing It All Together* to identify factors that might impact the child's experience.

Develop Strategies of Support

3. Distribute *Handout 10: Expectations and Supports That Match Individual Needs*. Help participants use the handout to develop specific supports for the child identified in Step 2. Remind participants that strategies need to address the family as well as the individual child. Have them record their strategies on *Handout 11: Bringing It All Together*.

Recruit Additional Staff Members

4. Distribute *Handout 5: Involving All Staff*. Have participants identify other staff members who can help implement the strategies. Help participants plan ways to involve these staff members and ask them to implement their plan over the next few weeks. Schedule a follow-up session to discuss results.

Evaluate Activities

5. At the follow-up session discuss:
    - How were the strategies implemented?
    - How did the support offered impact the child and family?
    - What other types of support and staff involvement might help in the future?

Journey Point

Suggest that participants put the handouts from the activity in their *Journey Bag*. Refer them to *Pocket Guide 1* to list new strategies for involving all staff in supporting families and children. Have them share their strategies with someone outside the coaching session.

Next Steps: Ideas to Extend Practice

The following activities can help participants review key information, practice skills, and assess their understanding of the concepts in this module.

- Conduct a staff meeting to discuss expectations that all staff have about children transitioning in or out of the program. Use *Handout 7: Expectations and Supports That Match Developmental Needs* as a basis of discussion. Ask staff to share their expectations of children and what ideas on the handout they might like to implement. Brainstorm ways that the program can work together to increase support during transitions. You may choose to invite an expert in child development or a mental health consultant to assist in identifying ways that the entire program could make staff expectations more appropriate for children.

- If there are some children that are not responding to the transition strategies the program has developed, outside consultants may help. Ask a local mental health specialist to identify the child's specific needs and individualize transition strategies. Make sure that parents have been consulted about the child and included in developing transition plans before calling a consultant. Explain to parents the advantage of including a consultant and be sure that they have given permission for the consultant to observe the child and review records. Ask the consultant to evaluate the child's coping capacity and provide additional community referrals if necessary.

- Use *Handout 6: Developmental Spiral* to help families recognize the importance of providing supports throughout early childhood. This activity could be introduced in a session with an individual family, during a workshop for parents, or during a parent-child program.

Give family members a copy of the handout. Explain how each loop of the spiral represents a stage of development, or a time when a child is working on a specific developmental task. Family members can discuss the supports that they have already provided at each stage of development, listing them next to the appropriate developmental stage. Then help family members identify the supports that they can provide during future developmental stages, listing them next to the appropriate stage.

Once all supports are identified, ask the child and family to decorate and personalize the spiral. As a final step, tell them to cut along the line to create a three-dimensional spiral. Discuss the growth that the spiral represents. Encourage each family to discuss the spiral with their child and to proudly display the spiral as a symbol of ongoing growth and support.

Handout 1: The Process of Adapting to Change

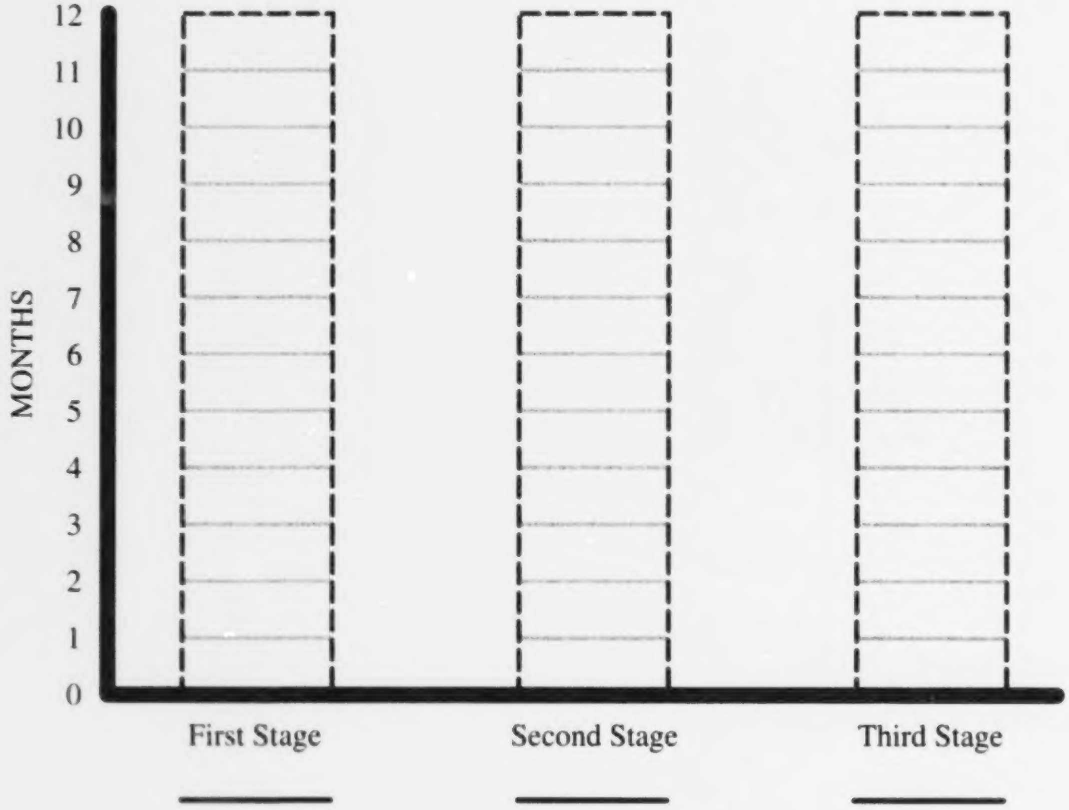
Stages	Needs	Reactions		
		Thinking	**Feeling**	**Acting**
Letting Go	• Acknowledgement of accomplishments • Continuing support • Symbol of what is being left • Time to express feelings	• Remember the past • Think about what you are leaving • Imagine leaving people, places, and things behind • Plan to leave some things and take others • Understand what you gained from the past	• Not ready for change • Emotional attachment to the way things have been • Sadness about leaving • Pride in accomplishments • Appreciate personal growth from experiences • Appreciate relationships that will continue to provide support	• Resist change • Behave in routine ways • Express feelings and thoughts about past experience • Celebrate accomplishments • Physically leave setting and end old role • End some relationships and continue others
Uncertainty	• Accurate information • Encouragement • Acknowledgement of skills and strengths • Time to express feelings	• Doubt ability to cope with change • Believe that you need others to guide and support you • Imagine what will be expected when the change occurs • Imagine many ways that you might act, feel, and relate when the change occurs	• Unable to adapt • Insecure • Want information • Confused • Anxious • Anticipation • Anxiety • Out-of-place • Excitement • Hopeful	• Express feelings and thoughts • Ask questions • Seek help • Delay or hesitate to take steps towards change • Test some new behaviors
Taking Hold	• Direction • Feedback • Challenge • Positive results	• Plan strategies to get help with the change • Clarify expectations • Evaluate response to behavior • Modify strategies • Believe you know how to act in new setting • Understand new experiences promote personal growth	• Accepted • Ready for change • Able to adapt • Want to learn • Encouraged • Hopeful • Confident	• Change behavior as directed or according to others' response • Gradually ask for less help • Take initiative

Handout 2: Timeline for Adapting to Change

Personal Transition______________________________

In the space above, identify a transition you have experienced (e.g., new job, moving, new baby).

Think about the stages of change you experienced and the length of time each stage lasted. Under the timeline, label the first stage to indicate how you were feeling initially: letting go, uncertainty, or taking hold. Shade in one box for each month you were in this stage. Repeat for the second and third stages. (Note: Everyone experiences the process of change differently. You may not have experienced all three stages.)



Handout 3: Children and Change

Note: Be sensitive to issues of confidentiality. Use this handout to interview staff. If you observe the child or family, make notes on a sheet of paper.

Child's Name and Age: ______________________________

Family Change: ______________________________

1. In general, how has the child reacted to the change?

2. What specific changes in behavior have been observed?

3. What has the child said about his or her feelings and thoughts?

4. What strategies has the family used to help the child cope with the change?

5. What strategies has the program staff used to help the child cope with the change?

6. What strategies seem to help the child?

7. What strategies do not seem to help the child?

Handout 4: Addressing Change

Letting Go

☐ Identify differences between settings for child and family.
☐ Plan celebrations that acknowledge accomplishments.
☐ Provide opportunities for sharing feelings about the transition.
☐ Give a symbolic remembrance to those leaving the setting.
☐ Invite children and families back to the setting for special events.
☐ Encourage children and families to maintain friendships with peers.
☐ Provide ongoing support to child and family.

Uncertainty

☐ Arrange visits to meet the new caregiver in the new setting.
☐ Help the child know what the new setting will be like.
☐ Provide information to parents about the new setting, including their role in it.
☐ Provide information to parents on how to support their child in transition.
☐ Assess child's developmental ability to cope with change.
☐ Gradually introduce changes in current setting to prepare child for new one.
☐ Provide ongoing support to child.
☐ Develop a plan for ongoing family services.

Taking Hold

☐ Communicate information about the child to new caregiver.
☐ Encourage the family to share information about the child with new caregiver.
☐ Transfer child and family records with parental consent.
☐ Arrange joint transition planning meetings.
☐ Create a welcoming environment for children and families.
☐ Incorporate familiar practices from old setting into new setting.
☐ Assess effectiveness of strategies in helping the child adjust to new setting.
☐ Revise strategies based on child's adaptation to new setting.
☐ Provide ongoing support to child and family.
☐ Exchange information about the child on an ongoing basis.

Handout 5: Involving All Staff

All Staff

☐ Establish partnerships with parents.
☐ Welcome children and families.
☐ Incorporate familiar practices into daily routine.
☐ Incorporate home culture and language into the program.
☐ Participate in transition strategy meetings.
☐ Network within the community.

Program Administrators/Coordinators

☐ Participate in community agencies as board members.
☐ Provide release time for transition planning, joint training, and site visitation.
☐ Coordinate interagency agreements.
☐ Define staff roles in transition.
☐ Involve all staff in orientation sessions for new families.
☐ Organize visitation days for families, children, and staff from other settings.
☐ Promote your program through the media and networking within the community.

Health/Nutrition Services

☐ Conduct joint health screenings, health fairs, and registration days.
☐ Coordinate joint health campaigns with community agencies and schools.
☐ Distribute literature and newsletters to community partners.
☐ Advise families of school health record requirements.
☐ Participate in I.E.P. meetings.
☐ Institute buddy system in cafeteria.
☐ Share successful multicultural menus with partners.
☐ Prepare preschoolers for cafeteria by instituting cafeteria days.
☐ Organize social events for children and families, such as potluck dinners, multicultural food night, or make-a-friend-at-lunch days.

Disabilities Services

☐ Coordinate I.E.P. meetings.
☐ Provide technical assistance to staff members.
☐ Coordinate efforts with teachers, parents, and specialists.
☐ Develop written transition plans for individuals with disabilities.
☐ Assist families in accessing services.
☐ Coordinate screening and follow-up special services.
☐ Assist parents in advocating for children with special needs.
☐ Develop peer support systems such as lunch buddies or sign language classes for all children.

Handout 5: Involving All Staff (Continued)

Family Services/Parent Involvement

- ☐ Organize parent information nights with former Head Start parents as speakers.
- ☐ Provide materials at home that involve parents in their child's education.
- ☐ Assist public schools in implementing home visiting.
- ☐ Communicate the strengths and goals of families leaving the program.
- ☐ Initiate peer support groups for parents who have left the program.
- ☐ Organize programwide family social events.
- ☐ Link families to appropriate services and follow up recommendations.
- ☐ Collaborate with partners to pool resources.

Education Services

- ☐ Invite families and children to visit the classroom before and after enrollment.
- ☐ Communicate regularly with families.
- ☐ Conduct home visits and visits to other settings.
- ☐ Invite teachers from other settings to visit your classroom.
- ☐ Organize I.E.P. and transition planning meetings.
- ☐ Plan end-of-the-year or goodbye celebrations.
- ☐ Provide information to children and families leaving the program.
- ☐ Coordinate staff use of familiar cues and routines to ease transitions.
- ☐ Coordinate transition planning meetings.

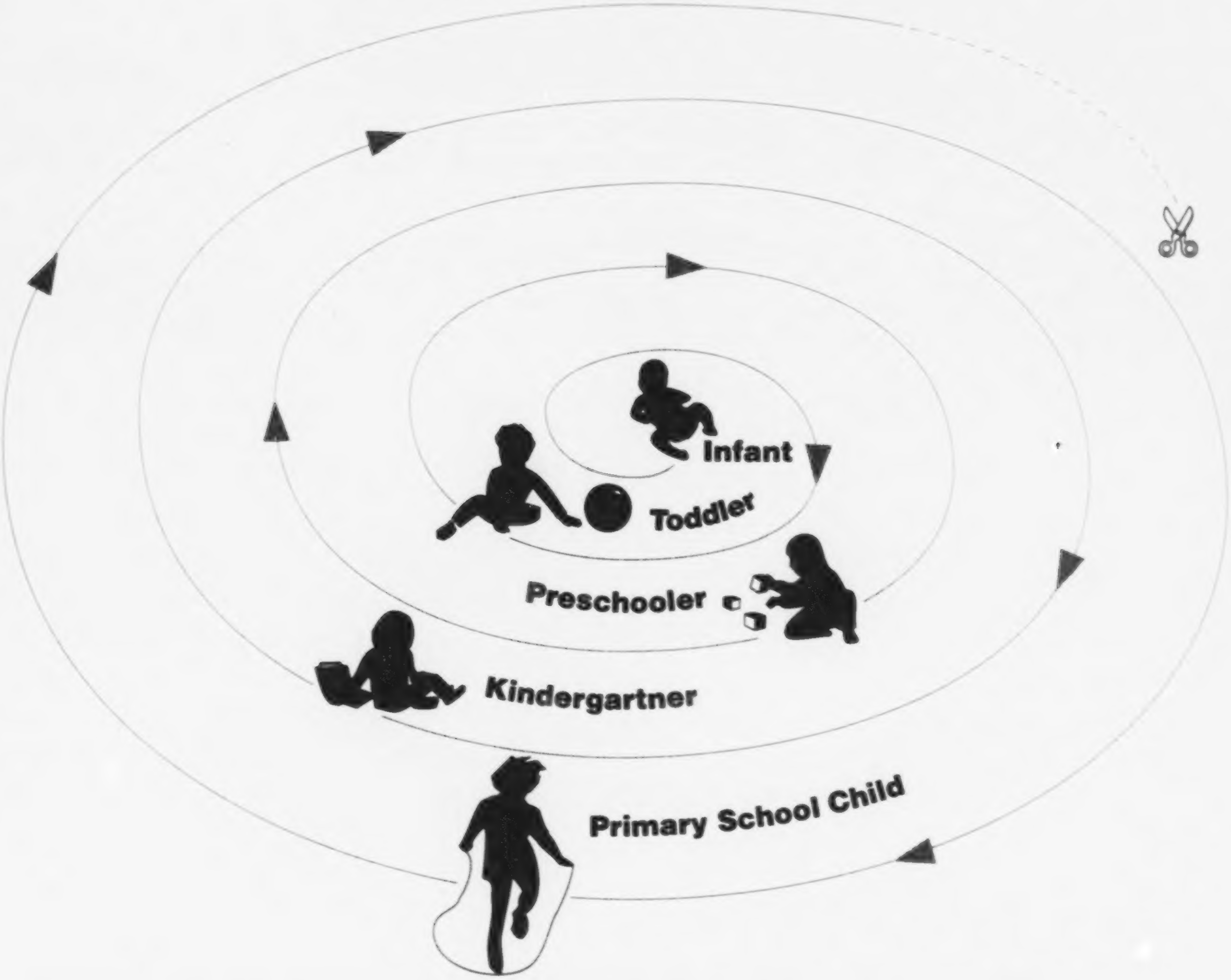
Support Staff/Volunteers

- ☐ Janitors provide tour of the building.
- ☐ Bus drivers help children practice bus procedures before transition.
- ☐ Cooks meet with parents and include family recipes in menus.
- ☐ Parent volunteers provide peer support to new families.
- ☐ Office personnel respond to telephone queries and confirm procedures for transfer of records.

Specialists

- ☐ School specialists coordinate multi-age activities (e.g., art and music programs).
- ☐ Training specialists coordinate efforts with partners to provide joint training.
- ☐ Consultants facilitate meetings between staff from various settings.

Handout 6: Developmental Spiral



Developmental Stage	Developmental Task
Infant	Trust and Security
Toddler	Independence
Preschooler	Communication and Social Skills
Kindergartner	Sense of Competency
Primary School Child	Sense of Belonging

Handout 7: Expectations and Supports That Match Developmental Needs

Expect Infants and Toddlers to transition best when they have opportunities to gradually establish trust and familiarity.

- ☐ Arrange for parents and children to visit new setting frequently.
- ☐ Arrange frequent visits of new caregiver to current setting.
- ☐ Introduce child gradually into new setting.
- ☐ Develop flexible routines oriented to individual child.
- ☐ Establish daily, two-way communication with families.
- ☐ Provide extra support to children and families as they adjust to new setting.

Expect Preschoolers and Kindergartners to transition best when concrete experiences, repetition, and guidance are provided to help them anticipate the transition.

- ☐ Arrange visits to new setting to meet teacher.
- ☐ Arrange home visits and visits to old setting by new teacher.
- ☐ Ensure that messages from parents and caregivers are simple and consistent.
- ☐ Introduce child to cues and routines that will be continued in new setting.
- ☐ Encourage child to express feelings and fantasies about the transition.
- ☐ Provide opportunities to develop language and social skills.
- ☐ Enhance parent's role through parent education, support, and involvement.

Expect Primary School Children to transition best when adults clarify expectations, give them a role in problem solving, and familiarize them with new teachers and peers.

- ☐ Arrange visits to new setting to meet teachers and peers.
- ☐ Arrange home visits and visits to sending classroom by new teacher.
- ☐ Present accurate information to child and answer all questions.
- ☐ Arrange for mixed-age or joint-class activities throughout the year.
- ☐ Provide time in class for social interaction and group problem solving with peers.
- ☐ Enhance parent's role through parent education, support, and involvement.

Handout 8: Scenes of Support

Note: Give each group one of the following scenes to act out. Point out that although groups may be assigned the same scene, they will use different strategies to support the child.

Jamal, the Teacher's Helper

Scene: Support Jamal by providing activities that help him test new ways of interacting with children. See activity suggestions for Strategy 3 on *Handout 9: Strategies for Offering Support: Preschoolers/Kindergartners.*

Jamal spends most of the day following the teacher and sharing stories about activities that he and his family have done. He seldom interacts with the other children or plays with any of the toys. In the previous setting, Jamal was the oldest child and loved helping the caregiver.

Jamal, the Teacher's Helper

Scene: Support Jamal by providing activities that build on experiences from previous settings. See activity suggestions for Strategy 5 on *Handout 9: Strategies for Offering Support: Preschoolers/Kindergartners.*

Jamal spends most of the day following the teacher and sharing stories about activities that he and his family have done. He seldom interacts with the other children or plays with any of the toys. In the previous setting, Jamal was the oldest child and loved helping the caregiver.

Maria Goes to Kindergarten

Scene: Support Maria by providing activities that gradually introduce some of the cues, routines, and activities that will be part of the new setting. See activity suggestions for Strategy 1 on *Handout 9: Strategies for Offering Support: Preschoolers/Kindergartners.*

Maria easily expresses herself when speaking Spanish. If she has difficulty understanding what the teacher is saying in English, she asks the Spanish-speaking staff to help her. Her mother enjoys volunteering with the children and teaches them Spanish songs. Next year Maria will enter kindergarten where there will be no Spanish-speaking staff in the classroom.

Handout 8: Scenes of Support (Continued)

Maria Goes to Kindergarten

Scene: Support Maria by providing activities that build on experiences at home. See activity suggestions for Strategy 5 on *Handout 9: Strategies for Offering Support: Preschoolers/Kindergartners.*

Maria easily expresses herself when speaking Spanish. If she has difficulty understanding what the teacher is saying in English, she asks the Spanish-speaking staff to help her. Her mother enjoys volunteering with the children and teaches them Spanish songs. Next year Maria will enter kindergarten where there will be no Spanish-speaking staff in the classroom.

Emily's Nightmares

Scene: Support Emily by providing activities that help her talk about the transition. See activity suggestions for Strategy 2 on *Handout 9: Strategies for Offering Support: Preschoolers/Kindergartners.*

Emily comes into school crying each morning. During outside playtime, she finds a spot alone to dig in the ground. When inside, she chooses to sit in the corner and look at books. Her parents report that she is having nightmares every night.

Emily's Nightmares

Scene: Support Emily by providing a welcoming environment and activities to help her feel that she belongs to a group. See activity suggestions for Strategy 4 on *Handout 9: Strategies for Offering Support: Preschoolers/Kindergartners.*

Emily comes into school crying each morning. During outside playtime, she finds a spot alone to dig in the ground. When inside, she chooses to sit in the corner and look at books. Her parents report that she is having nightmares every night.

Handout 9: Strategies for Offering Support: Preschoolers/Kindergartners

Strategy 1: Practice cues, routines, activities

Prepare the child for new routines:

- ☐ Gradually introduce new songs, fingerplays, objects, and bathroom procedures.
- ☐ Visit the new setting to identify both familiar and unfamiliar cues and routines.

Regularly implement some of the upcoming routines into present experiences:

- ☐ Remember children's developmental capabilities.
- ☐ Lining up can be difficult for preschoolers—make it a game and make it short.
- ☐ Create games that require balancing objects on cafeteria trays.
- ☐ Explain to parents how they can introduce cues such as songs or hand signals.

Strategy 2: Talk about transition

Talk about what will remain the same and what will change:

- ☐ Show children what activities they will also do in kindergarten.
- ☐ Point out staff members who they will still see.
- ☐ Take pictures of the new setting—talk about it at home and at school.

Discuss the children's feelings:

- ☐ Use books about change and transition to start discussions.
- ☐ Use baby pictures of children to talk about changes and accomplishments.

Strategy 3: Test out new behaviors

Use play:

- ☐ Provide props from the new setting for dramatic play.
- ☐ Use puppets to introduce new staff—have children talk with them.

Practice skills at home and at school:

- ☐ Have a cafeteria tray day.
- ☐ Integrate practice of self-help skills into daily activities.
- ☐ Practice calling home from the school's office.
- ☐ Invite new classmates home to play.
- ☐ Schedule activities with other classes.

Handout 9: Strategies for Offering Support: Preschoolers/Kindergartners (Continued)

Strategy 4: Show children that they belong

Create a welcoming environment:

Display children's names on cubbies, helper charts, and boards.
Label materials with pictures and names so children can easily find them.
Offer an accessible storage area for children's personal belongings.
Have staff greet children as they enter and say *goodbye* as they leave.
Provide peer buddies.
Call staff and children by name so that children learn faces and names.
Create a role for new children in all activities.

Strategy 5: Build on experiences from home and previous settings

Learn about past experiences:

Talk with previous caregivers to learn about children's favorite activities.
Organize a transition planning meeting.
Share children's records, with permission.

Develop an ongoing connection with home and past settings:

Organize a method for two-way communication with families.
Encourage family members to volunteer and attend school social events.
Allow children to share experiences from previous settings.
Encourage and help the child to send pictures or cards to previous caregivers.

Handout 10: Expectations and Supports That Match Individual Needs

Expect children to transition best when program staff are prepared for children and individualize the transition.

- ☐ Develop activities that are based on individual needs, interests, and skills.
- ☐ Adapt settings to accommodate special needs of children.
- ☐ Prepare staff and other children for the new child entering the program.

Expect children to transition best when program staff are flexible and evaluate if current strategies are easing the transition.

- ☐ Increase expectations gradually as a child responds to routines and cues.
- ☐ When difficulties arise, try new techniques.
- ☐ Continually share information with previous staff and families to assess the child's response.

Expect children to transition best when families are involved.

- ☐ Ask families for information on the child and family.
- ☐ Help families develop partnerships with caregivers and teachers.
- ☐ Help families advocate for their children throughout early childhood.

Expect children to transition best when transitions are planned for each child and family.

- ☐ Hold joint transition planning meetings.
- ☐ Consider family and child needs in the transition plan.
- ☐ Share information formally and informally among all parties.

Handout 11: Bringing It All Together

Child	Age	Developmental Task	Individual Traits	Supports Available	Effective Transition Supports and Expectations
		Internal		External	

Module 2

Transition and Continuity

Outcomes

As a result of completing this module, participants will be able to:

- Define and understand the concepts of *continuity* and *discontinuity*
- Identify the roles of *senders* and *receivers* in facilitating continuity throughout the transition process
- Identify key partners and develop strategies for carrying out individual roles as both senders and receivers
- Facilitate continuity for individual children and families by providing supports and opportunities that build on developmental experiences, family strengths, and established support systems

Key Concepts

- Transitions challenge individuals to develop new skills and meet new expectations. If expectations are based upon the individual's experience and skills, transition becomes an opportunity for growth and development. However, when expectations exceed the individual's ability and are unrelated to past experiences, transitions may interfere with development.
- Continuity between settings makes possible the growth and development that can occur when individuals experience transitions. In order to ensure continuity, staff need to identify family and child strengths and existing support systems.
- When senders and receivers work together as partners, they can facilitate continuity. Their roles include sharing information and coordinating activities.
- The most successful strategy for preparing children for the changes they will encounter during a transition is to facilitate continuity throughout the early childhood community.

Background Information

Providing experiences that match the changing developmental needs of children from birth to age eight is an ongoing task for parents and early childhood professionals. Children are challenged to learn new skills when they are introduced to new activities, new curriculum, and different materials. Staff can offer new challenges within an existing program in order to provide opportunities for children to learn and grow. At home, parents can provide increased opportunities for independent activities and peer interaction.

Transitioning children to new settings is another way that parents and early childhood staff can continue to provide new experiences for children with changing developmental needs. When the new environment builds on the experiences of the child, for example, by providing similar routines or activities, there is **continuity of experience** for the child. Similarly, when the new environment supports parent involvement, there is continuity of experience for parents. If the new setting provides the same services, such as health care or speech therapy, there is **continuity in services**. These are areas where **continuity between settings** is provided. **Continuity** enables both child and family to benefit from the challenges of change and sustain the gains they have made in previous settings.

In transition, the program staff that are transitioning children *out* of the program can be referred to as **senders**. **Receivers** are program staff that are transitioning children *into* the program. They, along with parents, staff from other programs, and community service providers, are **key partners** who facilitate continuity by sharing information about the transitioning child and family. The key partners also need to share information about similarities and differences in **setting characteristics:**

- Physical layout
- Availability of health and social services for families and children
- Kinds of activities available and curriculum philosophy
- Roles of parents and staff in making decisions
- Opportunities for parent involvement
- Peer relationships

When information is shared, both senders and receivers can develop appropriate strategies to provide continuity between settings. For example, when children switch from a setting in which parents provide transportation to a setting in which school buses provide transportation, the daily informal parent-staff interaction at drop-off time no longer occurs. However, staff in the new setting can still facilitate the continuity of parent involvement. They can provide communication folders or set up telephone times for staff to answer parents' questions and concerns.

Often the skills and behaviors developed in a previous setting cannot be transferred to the new setting without staff support and family and child preparation. For example, a toddler has just learned that when her primary caregiver uses a special puppet, it is time to sit quietly for a story on her caregiver's lap. This puppet is a **cue** or signal that a certain activity is about to take place or a specific behavior is expected. However, when the toddler moves to a new setting, she will not necessarily sit quietly for a story with a new caregiver who uses a special song as a cue for storytime. The toddler may not understand the new expectations such as sitting in a circle rather than on the caregiver's lap. The child's ability to continue to attend to storytime in the new setting depends on a joint effort among senders, receivers, and parents. When the key partners work together to gradually introduce the new cues and routines, while retaining familiar activities, the child's transition is eased. Strategies to use for this toddler might include:

- Arrange several parent-child visits to the new setting at storytime *before* the transition
- Have sending staff and parents introduce the special song with the puppet to signal storytime in the old setting
- Have staff in the new setting use the same or similar puppet as a familiar cue to the child
- Allow the new child to sit on the teacher's lap when storytime is offered at the new setting

If no effort is made to provide these supports, the child will experience an abrupt change that does not build on past experiences, known as **discontinuity**.

Discontinuity can also occur when the kind of information shared between settings is not useful. For example, if a health care professional sends complicated medical records to a child care facility, the specific methods for assisting the child may not be understood by the new caregivers. However, if the child care provider requests that the health care provider complete an evaluation form with specific care instructions, then essential information is shared. Parents or early intervention specialists could model techniques for caregivers in the new setting to ensure a continuation of necessary services.

Continuity can be facilitated and discontinuity can be avoided when parents and staff from various settings develop systems and networks to share information. Since children and families are served by professionals in numerous settings, to truly provide continuity everyone needs to recognize the importance of sharing information and working as partners to provide continuous support for families and children.

For more information on the concept of continuity, read *Digest: Beyond Transition: Ensuring Continuity in Early Childhood Services* located in the **Informational Resources** section.

Journey Point

Throughout this document, participants are asked to think of the training as a journey toward effective transition practices. At the end of each workshop and coaching activity, there is a place to stop on this journey, or *Journey Point,* so that participants can organize their materials and thoughts. In this module, at each *Journey Point* the trainer refers participants to their *Journey Bag* and *Pocket Guide 2*. These tools, and a summary of the journey, are provided in the *Introductory Activity: Beginning the Journey*, on page 9.

Activity 2–1: Setting Sail

Purpose: In this activity, participants will identify information to share and the vehicles for sharing it among staff from different settings.

Materials:

Handouts 12, 13, and 14
Digest: Beyond Transition: Ensuring Continuity in Early Childhood Services (Informational Resources)
Journey Bag, Pocket Guide 2 (Introduction)
Newsprint, markers

Introduce Concepts

1. Using the Background Information from Module 1 and this module, discuss and compare the definitions for *transition, continuity*, and *discontinuity*. Introduce participants to the key elements of continuity as discussed in *Digest: Beyond Transition: Ensuring Continuity in Early Childhood Services*, located in the **Informational Resources** section. Summarize by stating that effective transition practices provide for the continuation of comprehensive, quality programs throughout early childhood.

Discuss Sharing Information

2. Ask participants to think for a moment about how information sharing enables them to provide comprehensive services within Head Start. Ask participants how information is shared within their program and the community. Make the following points:

    - Within Head Start, the systems or vehicles used for sharing information include child and family records, team meetings, joint activities, and official memorandums.
    - To ensure that families and children experience continuity and are supported by all those within the community, information must be systematically shared between home, education, care, and service settings.

Discuss Senders and Receivers

3. Refer to the Background Information section to discuss the definitions for *senders* and *receivers*. Distribute *Handout 12: Sharing Information* and explain that this handout lists the kinds of information that can be shared between senders and receivers and ways to share it.

Small Group Activity

4. Distribute *Handout 13: Scenarios*. Divide participants into small groups, assigning a number from one to eight to each group, which will identify its scenario and role as a sender or a receiver. Distribute

Handout 14: Senders and Receivers and ask the groups to answer questions one through three based on their scenario and role.

Illustrate Sailboat Analogy

5. Reconvene the entire group. Draw a sailboat with a mast and three sails on newsprint. Label the boat *Head Start Child* and the mast *Family*. Label the sails: *Health and Social Services*, *Child Care*, and *Education*. Tell participants that sailors depend on the strength of the ropes that connect the sails to each other and to the mast to navigate their boat. Like sailors on a journey, children and families depend on strong connections between settings to sail smoothly through transitions.

Draw Connections

6. Ask the small groups to list the individuals and agencies involved in each of their scenarios and record this information on the appropriate section of the boat. For example, Katie's case involved:

- Family members (*Family*)
- School health professional who conducted the screening (*Health and Social Services* and *Education*)
- Church child care program (*Child Care*)

Draw connecting lines among the individuals and agencies involved in each scenario.

Combine Small Groups

7. Summarize by saying that just as a sailboat cannot sail unless the sails are linked and strongly connected to the mast, continuity cannot be established without vehicles for communicating information among community programs. Ask the senders and receivers with the same scenario to work together, comparing their answers to the first three questions of Handout 14 and answering question four on the handout. Refer them to *Handout 12: Sharing Information* and explain that this handout may assist them with this task.

Large Group Activity

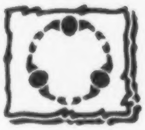
8. Reconvene the entire group. Ask each group to report their information sharing methods. List on newsprint all the vehicles for sharing information that were identified. Once all groups have reported, ask:

- Do these vehicles presently exist in your community? Are they used communitywide or just between specific programs?
- What specific benefits would result if more systems and vehicles for sharing information throughout the community were developed?

Journey Point

Suggest that participants put the handouts from the activity into their *Journey Bag*. Refer them to *Pocket Guide 2* to list new strategies for sharing information. Have participants share their ideas with a partner.

Activity 2–2: Partner Meeting



Purpose: In this activity, participants identify how transition issues are resolved when senders and receivers share information and coordinate activities.

Materials:

Handout 15
Journey Bag, Pocket Guide 2 (Introduction)
Notepaper

Introduction to Activity

1. Tell participants that children and families often make gains in Head Start due to the external supports provided. To maintain these gains after the families leave the program, staff from other programs need to be aware of the families' needs. Effective transition practices involve working with these *key partners* to provide a continuation of supports.

Small Group Assignment

2. Divide the participants into groups of three and distribute *Handout 15: Transition Issues*. Assign each group an issue and explain that they are to role play a transition meeting. Review these steps for the role play:

   - Group members choose the role they will take: sender, receiver, or recorder. Then they briefly discuss the issue assigned to their group.

   - Senders and receivers begin the transition meeting working together to resolve the issue.

   - Recorders write down difficulties that senders and receivers have in resolving issues and make note of who else should be involved in the meeting.

Identify Difficulties in the Role Play

3. After role playing for a few minutes, have participants pause. Ask the recorders if they have identified any other key partners who could assist this transition. If another partner is identified, have the recorder take on the role of the needed person. This might be a health or social service worker, school administrator, parent, or other community resource person. Remind the group that in real life the sender or receiver would have contacted the third person.

Share and Review

4. Ask each group to share the results of their role play by answering the following questions:
   - How did children and families benefit from this meeting?
   - What issues were resolved and which were unresolved?
   - What important information and strategies are added when parents and other key partners become part of the planning team?

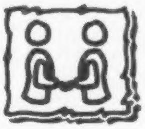
Summarize

5. Summarize these important points:
   - To continue support for families and children, staff must identify key partners and involve them in transition planning.
   - Children and families benefit by having individualized plans that parents help develop.
   - Not all transition issues can be resolved on an individual basis. Some larger issues require ongoing joint efforts of key partners.

Journey Point

Suggest that participants put the handouts from the activity in their *Journey Bag*. Refer them to *Pocket Guide 2* to list new strategies for coordinating the continuation of services and developmentally appropriate practices. Have them share their ideas with a partner.

Activity 2–3: Sender and Receiver Roles



Purpose: In this activity, participants evaluate the impact on continuity when senders and receivers share information.

Materials:

Handouts 12 and 16
Digest: Continuity of Care and the Importance of Relationships (Informational Resources)
Journey Bag, Pocket Guide 2 (Introduction)

Coach Preparation Notes:

Instead of using Kendra's story you can use a true story such as one provided by a parent in your program. Ask the parent to tape-record his or her transition story. Have participants listen to the tape and discuss the transition in Steps 1 and 2.

Review Kendra's Story

1. Distribute *Handout 16: Kendra's Story* to participants in the coaching session. After they read it, ask them to identify factors that made this transition difficult. Help participants identify factors such as routine, curriculum, transportation, and expectations. Use the Background Information to define *continuity* and *discontinuity* for participants. Explain that Kendra is experiencing the opposite of continuity, or *discontinuity*.

Brainstorm Strategies

2. Ask participants to read *Digest: Continuity of Care and the Importance of Relationships*, located in the **Informational Resources** section, or you can summarize the key points for participants. Use the ideas in the article and the Background Information section to assist in brainstorming ways that Kendra's family, her kindergarten teacher, and her preschool teachers could facilitate continuity for Kendra.

Identify Recent Transition

3. Ask participants to identify a transition that was especially difficult for a child or family who recently came into their program. Examples might include a child who did not easily adapt to the routine of the program or a parent who did not understand the program's policies. Ask:

   - What information did you receive about the child, family, and the previous setting?
   - Did you have enough information?
   - Did the information you were given indicate that the previous setting was very different from the current one?
   - How could information have been shared?

Keep a Log

4. Use the Background Information section to define *senders* and *receivers*. Ask participants to identify program representatives from other settings who might be considered key partners to contact about an upcoming transition. Ask participants to keep a log over the next few weeks of specific information that they feel will help with this transition. Such information might include a description of the child and family, information about the program, or details about how the transition was explained to the child.

Develop a Plan of Action

5. Meet with participants after they have kept a log for one to two weeks. Help them determine the information that would be important to share with key partners and the best way to share it. Review the strategies suggested in *Handout 12: Sharing Information* and help participants develop a plan of action. Have them implement the plan.

Follow Up

6. Conduct a follow-up session to help participants evaluate and refine their information-sharing strategies.

Journey Point

Suggest that participants put the handouts from this activity in their *Journey Bag*. Refer them to *Pocket Guide 2* to list new strategies for sharing information. Have them share their ideas with someone outside the coaching session.

Activity 2–4: Setting Characteristics

Purpose: In this activity, participants develop strategies for facilitating continuity between settings with multiple differences.

Materials:

Handout 17
Hands-on Activities (Informational Resources)
Journey Bag, Pocket Guide 2 (Introduction)
Newsprint, markers

Discuss

1. Distribute *Handout 17: Settings and Continuity*. Briefly discuss each category of setting characteristics and how each setting is unique. Point out:

   - Children and families can be better prepared to adapt to the new environment during transitions if new staff are familiar with the previous setting's characteristics.
   - Differences between the old and new can be minimized, while the similarities can be maximized.

Identify Setting Characteristics

2. Divide participants into four groups and assign to each group one of these four settings: *home, child care, preschool,* or *elementary school*. Tell participants to create a realistic description that reflects both the strengths and challenges of their assigned setting. Ask participants to record the setting characteristics in the appropriate column on the handout.

Role Play

3. Reconvene the large group. Ask for a volunteer to role play a parent and interview the preschool group to find out about the setting characteristics. While the interview is being conducted, have participants observing the role play list the identified setting characteristics on the handout.

Summarize Characteristics

4. Repeat the role play interview with the various settings. For the home setting, have a volunteer play the part of a staff member seeking information from a parent during a home visit. After each interview, those involved in the role play can summarize the key characteristics of each setting to make sure that observers recorded them accurately.

Trainer Preparation Notes:

In Step 5, it might be easiest for participants to compare only two settings at a time. If needed, either an example from the Background Information or one from personal experience can be used to model the following discussion. You may choose to distribute some of the *Hands-on Activities* in the **Informational Resources** section to assist small groups in this activity.

Small Group Discussion

5. Have participants rejoin their small group to compare their assigned setting with others and to discuss the differences they observed. Write the following discussion questions on newsprint and refer the groups to them:

- How can similarities between settings be maximized and differences minimized?
- How can staff prepare children and families for change?
- How can parents be involved in facilitating continuity?

Large Group Discussion

6. Reconvene the whole group and have each individual group share their strategies for facilitating continuity. Ask:

- What differences are easier to address and what differences are more difficult to minimize?
- How can continuity be achieved even when there are many differences between the settings?

Review

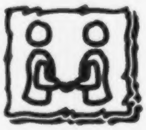
7. Review by summarizing these points:

- Sometimes simple strategies will minimize differences; sometimes more complex strategies and more time for preparation are required to achieve continuity. For example, the environment may need to be physically adapted to meet the special needs of an individual child.
- Interviews are one method to gather information; other ways include classroom observation, school visits, and staff pairing.
- It is important to be familiar with the different settings in your community to help parents choose the setting with the best characteristics for their child, including the least restrictive environment for children with special needs.

Journey Point

Suggest that participants put the handouts from the activity in their *Journey Bag*. Refer them to *Pocket Guide 2* to list new strategies for maximizing similarities and minimizing differences. Have them share their ideas with a partner.

Activity 2–5: Preparing the Child and Family



Purpose: In this activity, participants develop strategies to prepare children and families for differences in settings.

Materials:

Handout 17
Hands-on Activities (Informational Resources)
Journey Bag, Pocket Guide 2 (Introduction)

Identify Differences

1. In an initial coaching session, discuss the transitions of children who have recently entered the participants' program. Remind them that children face many changes when they transition. Ask participants to identify the settings where these children were previously enrolled and to think about the differences between previous settings and the participants' program. Some examples might be changes in routines, environments, and caregiving practices. Ask:

- Did you know what all the differences between the settings were?
- Which transitions appeared to be smoothest and which were the most difficult?

Identify Setting Characteristics

2. Using examples from the Background Information section, discuss the importance of identifying differences between settings when preparing children and families for change. Distribute *Handout 17: Settings and Continuity* and tell participants to complete information about their own setting and about one of the settings identified in Step 1. Recommend that they gather information about the previous setting through interviews and, if possible, a site visit.

Discuss Individual Role

3. Hold a second coaching session to discuss the differences that other children might encounter during the transition between their setting and the one they investigated. Ask:

- What is your role in addressing differences among settings?
- What more could you do?

Develop a Plan

4. Distribute copies of the *Hands-on Activities*, located in the **Informational Resources** section. Assist participants in identifying activities that they could use in their program and help them develop a plan for implementation.

Expanding Role

5. After the plan has been implemented, meet with participants to discuss the results of the activities. Point out that additional ways to maximize similarities and minimize differences include:

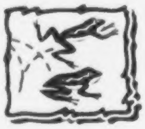
   - Meeting with key partners to discuss concerns and brainstorm solutions

   - Assisting parents in developing skills to determine the programs that best match their child's individual needs

Journey Point

Suggest that participants put the handouts from the activity in their *Journey Bag*. Refer them to *Pocket Guide 2* to list new strategies for maximizing similarities and minimizing differences. Have them share their ideas with someone outside the coaching session.

Next Steps: Ideas to Extend Practice



The following activities can help participants review key information, practice skills, and assess their understanding of the concepts in this module.

- Meet with key partners to discuss how records are transferred to and from their programs. Explain that the purpose of the meeting is to improve the records system so that the information transferred is useful and timely. To start the meeting, ask a representative from each program to explain the program's system of records transfer and provide samples of the forms. The explanation should also include who uses the records received from other programs, what other information would be helpful to those staff members, and when they need to have the records sent to them.

  Then as a group, compare the systems that each program uses and the kinds of information they would like to share.

  — Are many programs asking families to provide information that could be provided by senders?

  — Are sending programs using records that are easy for receivers to use or are records overly technical or vague?

  — Are there common elements in the various program forms that might be communicated using a jointly developed transfer form?

  — Are issues of confidentiality being addressed?

Ask participants to suggest ways to improve the records transfer system and commit to continue working together. Some strategies that partners might coordinate include:

— Jointly developing a form that provides information in a clear and useful format

— Providing joint staff training on records management

— Systematically informing parents of the advantages of releasing records

— Creating a timeline that lists dates when program records need to be transferred

- Conduct a workshop for families to help them learn the value of sharing information. At the workshop, ask former Head Start parents to explain how their child's teacher helped the child by using information the parents provided. Then have participants find partners and role play parent meetings with the kindergarten teacher. Suggest that the parents tell the teacher five things that they would like the teacher to know about themselves and their child. After the role play, summarize the kinds of information that parents can share about their child and themselves. Discuss the formal and informal times that parents can meet with teachers.

  Provide parents with a short form letter or writing paper. Review the kinds of information that parents can provide in a letter to the child's new teacher. Information on the form might include the child's and family's interests, strengths, and goals, as well as telephone numbers and times that parents are available to volunteer. Write a sample letter together by asking volunteers to suggest the kinds of information they would want the teacher to know. Remind parents that notes and letters to the teacher can be valuable ways to share new information about the child and family throughout the year.

  For more ideas on ways to help families identify personal strengths and document their achievements and milestones, refer to the training guide *Family Growth: A Continuous Process* in the series **Training Guides for the Head Start Learning Community**.

Handout 12: Sharing Information

Share information about children and families with key partners

Release or request confidential records (with permission).
Conduct joint transition planning meetings with senders, receivers, and parents.
Conduct interviews with families and use an intake form to gather information.
Communicate family strengths and parent contributions made to your program.
Recommend ways that new program staff can involve parents.
Relate successful strategies that bridge cultural differences and meet special needs.
Conduct post-transfer meetings to assess each child's adaptation to the new setting.

Share information about settings with children and families

Provide times for children and families to visit the new setting.
Visit children and families while they are still in their old setting.
Provide orientation materials describing program policies and expectations.
Match parents who are new to the setting with parents already in the setting.
Match children who are new to the setting with children already in the setting.
Use both written and oral methods to tell families about the daily curriculum.
Conduct home visits.

Share information about settings with key partners

Meet with key partners individually.
Develop written materials to promote your program.
Invite partners to visit your setting and join in training sessions.
Increase media coverage of your program.
Network within the community.
Conduct in-person or telephone interviews.
Ask partners to work in advisory positions for your program.
Add partners to your mailing list and exchange newsletters, program notices, etc.
Attend conferences and meetings conducted by other early childhood professionals.

Handout 13: Scenarios

Katie: Group 1 is the sender (family); Group 2 is the receiver (public school)

Katie lives with her mother, an aunt, and two cousins in a rural area. Katie is five years old and will attend a public school kindergarten in two weeks. Katie's mother works, and the aunt takes care of the three children during the day. As part of the public school orientation, Katie had a health screening. The results indicate that Katie needs glasses. Katie's mother does not know how she can afford glasses because even though she works, the family is barely getting by. In fact, the phone has recently been cut off. Katie's mother and aunt are reluctant to ask for help because they have always been able to manage by themselves. Katie and her cousins attend a mother's day out program sponsored by their church. Katie loves the activities and is excited about going to school. The program has given Katie a portfolio of her work.

Celia: Group 3 is the sender (Karen); Group 4 is the receiver (Head Start staff)

Celia (three years old) and her sister (four years old) have been attending Karen's family day care home ever since they were infants. However, Karen is closing her day care at the end of the summer. Celia and her sister have always played together at day care. Recently the parents separated. Since then, Karen has noticed that Celia gets very upset when her sister plays with other children. The girls will attend Head Start and will be in different classrooms. Karen is concerned that Celia will be very unhappy when she is away from her sister. When Karen tries to talk to Celia's mother about these concerns, the mother talks about her own problems.

James: Group 5 is the sender (Head Start); Group 6 is the receiver (public school—preschool special education department)

During Head Start hearing and speech evaluations, James was diagnosed with a speech delay. The public school was notified of the test results. The preschool special education department has informed James' mother that the test results are not valid and James will have to be tested by the school specialist. James' mother called the school specialist and scheduled an appointment in three months, which was the next available testing date. She is busy taking care of five other young children and thinks that James just wants attention because he has so many brothers and sisters. The Head Start teacher feels that James should receive services right away. She finds that because his classmates cannot understand him, James grabs and pushes instead of talking to them.

Hakim: Group 7 is the sender (Early Head Start); Group 8 is the receiver (Head Start)

Hakim was very reluctant to leave his mother when he began attending Early Head Start at eighteen months. However, his mother was very involved in helping Hakim resolve his difficulties. She informed the staff of his likes and dislikes, came to the center with him until he formed an attachment to the primary caregiver, and conveyed a positive attitude about the center to Hakim. He has adapted to the program, but is still easily upset by any disruption of the routine. Now that Hakim is three years old and transitioning to a preschool Head Start program, the staff wants to make sure he is prepared for the new routine. The preschool program is currently undergoing changes in its program due to staff turnover and expansion of the program.

Handout 14: Senders and Receivers

Discuss questions 1–3 about your scenario. As you answer the questions, consider the following:

The child's and family's **unique strengths** and **needs**

Support systems that are in place or that could be available to this family

Both **senders** and **receivers** have information to share

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1. What information needs to be shared?

2. Who has the information?

3. In your role as sender or receiver, what other information would you want to have about this case?

Wait for the trainer to regroup before completing the last question.

4. Brainstorm vehicles for sharing essential information with all those involved in planning this transition. Refer to *Handout 12: Sharing Information* to identify additional vehicles for sharing information.

Handout 15: Transition Issues

Issue 1: Continuing Parent Involvement

Nancy's mother enjoys volunteering in Head Start several times each week. She enjoys the children and has begun taking classes in child development. Soon Nancy will be going to an elementary school. Nancy's mother has heard that the elementary school does not welcome volunteers in the classroom. In fact, the elementary school has many classroom volunteers who were recruited through the PTA. After an orientation these volunteers can work directly with the children.

Issue 2: Continuing Developmentally Appropriate Practices

Ms. Miller has had the same group of children as infants and toddlers for two years. The children are preparing to move into a three-year-old class at the same center and will have a new teacher. Ms. Miller feels that the children are very attached to her and she is worried that in the preschool class they will not receive the same love and nurturing. When she visited the preschool class in the spring, the children were working very independently while the teacher spent her time meeting with Ms. Miller. The preschool teacher knows that three-year-olds need a lot of reassurance and time to become acquainted with the routines. She wants the classroom to be a welcoming place for both children and families.

Issue 3: Assisting with the Transfer of Records

Tamika has been receiving home-based Head Start services at her father's home in another state. She has recently moved in with her mother. Her records have not been transferred and her mother is having trouble enrolling her in day care. Her mother does not know which immunizations Tamika has had or what kind of curriculum was used in her previous program.

Issue 4: Supporting Non-English Speaking Families

Raul is attending Head Start for the first time. His parents know very little English and speak Spanish. The staff at the Head Start center speak only English. Raul has several brothers and sisters who attend English as a Second Language (ESL) classes at the elementary school. Raul was referred by the ESL teacher, who visited the family in the summer. She said the parents are very anxious that Raul play with children his age, but they are worried because he is shy.

Issue 5: Initiating New Services

Sam's grandmother cares for him after kindergarten. The school counselor has recommended that he attend an art therapy class for children with emotional problems. The art therapy class has successfully helped children with similar problems to express their feelings and gain emotional control. The grandmother thinks that the best thing for Sam is more discipline in the home. She does not want to be responsible for taking him to art therapy after school. The art therapist has been told that Sam's mother is on drugs and his father is absent from the home.

Handout 15: Transition Issues (Continued)

Issue 6: Continuing Special Services

Kevin has a disability and has been receiving early intervention services through the community health clinic. The early intervention worker has recommended that his parents enroll him in the early Head Start program so that his need for ongoing stimulation can be better met. The Head Start program has never had a child with his particular disability and is concerned about medical complications. The health clinic sent Kevin's records to the Head Start center, and the staff found them very confusing.

Issue 7: Serving Mobile Families

Joy has been attending a migrant Head Start program and expects to move with her family at the end of the summer. It is unclear where the family will move, but the Head Start staff want to make sure that the new setting will receive all of Joy's records. Also, the family is anxious to work with Joy at home.

Issue 8: Continuing Peer Relationships

Tracy spends the morning in a Title 1 program. She used to take the bus home and had a special bus buddy. She has just been enrolled in after-school care in the same building as the Title 1 program. She cries every day when it is time to leave her morning class and clings to her bus buddy. Her parents report that Tracy does not know any of the children in the after-school program.

Issue 9: Developing Cultural Understanding

Running Water has attended a tribal Head Start program. He is going to the public school, which is trying to adapt its curriculum so it is more sensitive to the multicultural population that it serves. The Head Start teacher does not understand why the public school kindergarten teacher wants to visit the center. When the Head Start teacher's children were in school, some Native American children were teased about their names and the school Thanksgiving play stereotyped Native Americans.

Issue 10: Matching Expectations to Past Experience

Lim's parents have been working with him at home since preschool when they were involved in the Home Instruction Program for Preschool Youngsters (HIPPY). In kindergarten, the teacher sent home joint parent-child assignments. Lim's parents want to continue to be involved in home instruction in first grade, but the teacher explained that the children will be assigned homework to do alone. The teacher knows that parents in her school are very motivated and provide enrichment through home activities. Her focus is helping children work independently.

Handout 16: Kendra's Story

After two years in a private preschool, Kendra moved into a public school kindergarten this year. She is having trouble adjusting.

Before preschool started, one of the teachers had visited every child at home to learn about the family. Kendra's grandmother walked her to preschool every day and volunteered at school twice a week. During school, the children moved between learning centers, had circle time and small group time, played outside, and had a short rest every day. Lunch was served in the classroom by the teachers, who helped Kendra cut her food. Kendra's favorite activity was art, but after she injured her hand last year, she has had a little trouble using scissors. She usually tears her paper or needs help with cutting.

At the end of the preschool year, the teachers told the children they would be going to kindergarten. The teachers read a book about kindergarten, which made kindergarten sound a lot like preschool. Kendra's grandmother enrolled her in the public school kindergarten and the preschool sent Kendra's records. Kendra spent the summer at home with her grandmother and aunt. She did not have much of a schedule.

When Kendra started kindergarten, it was not like the book at all. She had to take a bus every day and the older children on the bus frightened her. Kendra's grandmother could not ride on the bus; it was too far for her to walk, so she could not volunteer. The kindergarten children spent most of the day sitting at tables doing worksheets, and Kendra had some trouble holding her pencil and writing. She felt frustrated in kindergarten and had trouble sitting still. She cried sometimes and put her head down on the table, usually late in the morning before lunch. The children ate in a cafeteria and Kendra's lunch came sealed in a package that she had trouble opening—often there was not time to finish lunch.

Kendra's kindergarten teacher does not want to be influenced by another teacher's opinions of her, so she has not read the preschool records. The teacher wants Kendra tested to see if this is the right environment for her. The teacher does not think Kendra is **ready** for kindergarten and finds her behavior disruptive. She also wonders if something in Kendra's home might be causing these problems.

Handout 17: Settings and Continuity

Setting Characteristics	Home	Child Care
Environment/ Room Setup		
Health/Social Services		
Kinds of Activities		
Parent and Caregiver Roles		
Peer Relationships		

Handout 17: Settings and Continuity (Continued)

Setting Characteristics	Preschool	Elementary School
Environment/ Room Setup		
Health/Social Services		
Kinds of Activities		
Parent and Caregiver Roles		
Peer Relationships		

Module 3

Partnerships for Continuity

Outcomes

As a result of completing this module, participants will be able to:

- Identify the common goals that early childhood professionals and parents share in supporting transitions from one setting to another
- Determine goals and strategies to develop effective transition practices and facilitate continuity
- Identify the strengths and resources that partners can contribute to achieve common goals
- Develop strategies for networking with key partners

Key Concepts

- The early childhood community includes parents, educators, caregivers, and service providers from various settings.
- Recognizing the common ground of everyone who works in the early childhood community is key to building partnerships across settings.
- Continuity between settings is best established through active, meaningful partnerships and information sharing.
- Working collaboratively requires an appreciation of the skills and resources that each partner can contribute toward common goals.
- Networking within the early childhood community allows those working in the field to share best practices and to develop partnerships in transition.

Background Information

Efforts to provide continuity throughout the early childhood community require the time and commitment of early childhood professionals, parents, and the broader community. To build this commitment, sending and receiving staff can work together as partners along with parents to develop transition plans. By developing collaborative relationships and establishing common goals in transition, partners ease transitions and improve the quality of education, care, and services for families and children.

Partnerships between programs can also provide a foundation for continuity. Across the country, programs have developed strategies so they can work with other programs or groups to establish continuity. Structural or administrative supports, such as joint funding and interagency agreements, provide incentives and tools for partners and communities. These collaborative community teams define transition goals and share responsibility for achieving common goals.

When programs begin to build partnerships and collaborative teams, they may encounter differences in philosophy, funding, and program priorities. These issues can often be worked out by improving communication. Model programs and local initiatives have adopted **promising practices**, or strategies that help improve communication between partners. For example, many programs network within community organizations, invite key partners to a breakfast or a program's special event, and sponsor small gatherings of community members. These promising practices create a welcoming environment for key partners to begin to better understand each other. Examples of successful ways that programs welcome parents as partners include:

- **Summer Picnic**—Head Start Transition Demonstration Project, Chapel Hill, North Carolina. Head Start sponsors a summer activity for children transitioning out of Head Start. The children and families attend a picnic on the public school grounds in the summer. The principal is invited to attend to provide informal information. To accommodate working parents, the picnic is scheduled in the late afternoon.
- **The Mamas and Papas of Byck Elementary**—Byck Cradle School, Louisville, Kentucky. Parents and staff formed an after-school choral group. The group has since performed at statewide educational functions as well as school-based activities.

Once Head Start and community partners have become acquainted and established some common ground at an introductory event, a collaborative team can organize to more formally address issues in transition and continuity. The team can choose to adapt additional promising practices such as placing transition coordinators in elementary schools, coordinating curricula between Head Start and public schools, pairing parent mentors with new parents, and establishing parent resource centers in the schools.

Journey Point

Throughout this document, participants are asked to think of the training as a journey toward effective transition practices. At the end of each workshop and coaching activity, there is a place to stop on this journey, or *Journey Point*, so that participants can organize their materials and thoughts. In this module, at each *Journey Point* the trainer refers participants to their *Journey Bag* and *Pocket Guide 3*. These tools, and a summary of the journey, are provided in the *Introductory Activity: Beginning the Journey*, on page 9.

Trainer Preparation Notes:

This module provides participants from education, care, and service environments with an opportunity to identify themselves as members of the early childhood community. The audience should include parents and representatives from various early childhood settings such as child care centers, private preschools, public schools, and health and social service agencies. Invite these representatives to attend the training if they are not already participants.

Activity 3–1: Common Ground

Purpose: In this activity, participants focus on the common goals of members of the early childhood community and lay the groundwork to support and work collaboratively with those from other settings.

Materials:

Journey Bag, Pocket Guide 3 (Introduction)
Newsprint, markers

Identify Roles

1. On newsprint, draw a large circle. Ask participants to name their job titles or roles (for example, teacher, parent, volunteer). Write these titles and roles in the circle as shown in the *Sample Early Childhood Community Pie* on page 82. Then have participants list roles of others in their community who work with young children and their families. Add these roles to the circle.

Discuss Roles

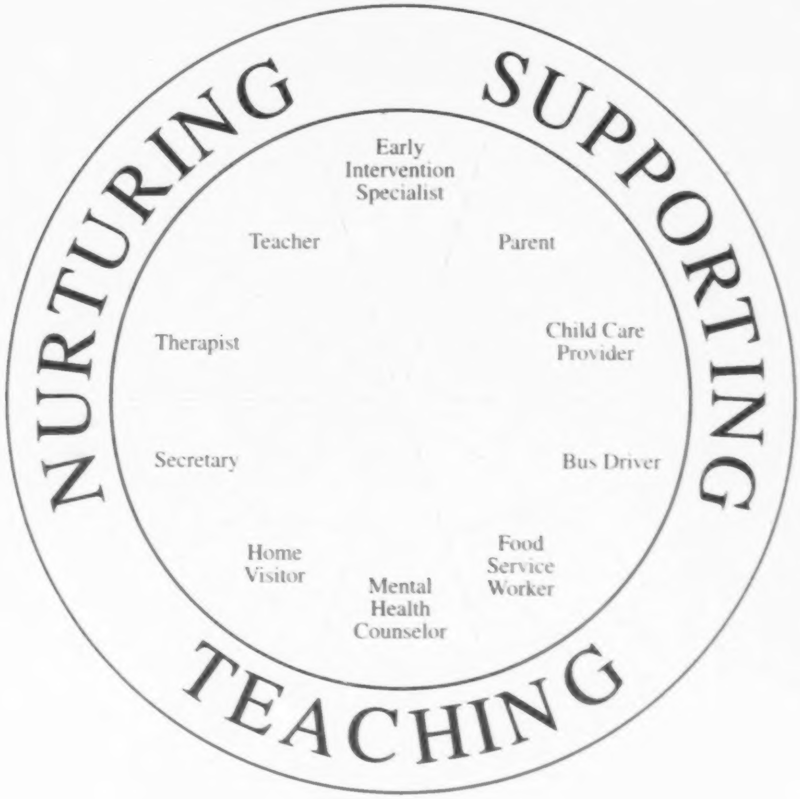
2. Draw another circle outside the first circle. Place the words *Teaching, Nurturing*, and *Supporting* on the outer circle as shown in the *Sample Early Childhood Community Pie*. Ask participants to give examples of their daily activities that teach, nurture, and support children and families. Discuss how those individuals not in the training also teach, nurture, and support families and children.

Identify Overlap of Tasks

3. Discuss how the many roles within the community share tasks. Use the following examples or those presented by the group to highlight the overlap:

   - Parents, teachers, and child care workers all teach children when they read to them.
   - Bus drivers, mental health counselors, and family members all nurture children when they listen carefully to children and patiently answer questions.
   - Home visitors, parent volunteers, and teachers all support families when they refer families to community resources.

Sample Early Childhood Community Pie



Discuss Benefits

4. Ask parents and staff to begin thinking of themselves as early childhood professionals who are members of a community that collectively teaches, nurtures, and supports children and families. All members of the community share a common goal of promoting the positive development of both children and families. Label the circle *The Early Childhood Community Pie*. Explain the benefits of the early childhood community working together.

   - Like the ingredients in a pie, each member of the community contributes to the flavor and quality of the whole pie. Each role is enhanced when members work together to provide services for children and families.
   - Members who recognize the common goals of those fulfilling different roles can offer each other resources, ideas, skills, and support.

- Together, members of the community can advocate for policies and funding that support children and families.
- New initiatives to serve children and families can be developed collaboratively.
- Through information sharing, partnerships can be developed to ease transitions and facilitate continuity between settings.

Small Group Discussions

5. Have participants form small groups. Be sure that each group includes a variety of early childhood professionals. Ask each group member to discuss her problems and concerns about transition and continuity. Provide the groups with newsprint to record the problems and concerns that members have in common.

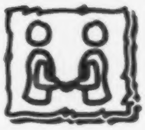
Large Focus Group

6. Ask each small group to share its list of common problems and concerns. Then ask the large group to work with you to identify some steps that the community could take to address these issues.

Journey Point

Refer participants to the back of *Pocket Guide 3* in their *Journey Bag*. Have them list their personal goals for nurturing, teaching, and supporting children and families in the *Notes* column. Point out that the *Discoveries* column can be used to list insights about their role or about the early childhood community. Then ask participants to discuss their ideas with a partner.

Activity 3–2: Find a Partner



Purpose: In this activity, participants develop strategies for networking with key partners in transition.

Materials:

Program Profiles (Informational Resources)
Journey Bag, Pocket Guide 3 (Introduction)

Discussion

1. During the first coaching session, discuss your early childhood community. Explain that there are many organizations working with the same children and families and that the more these groups can recognize their common goals, the more they can accomplish. Ask participants if they know of any groups that meet for joint training, provide collaborative services, or are involved in transition initiatives in their community.

Research

2. Ask participants to spend some time on their own researching other groups in their community that provide education, care, or services to families and children. Make the following suggestions:

- Read the newspaper for organizational announcements and for information.
- Check public places such as libraries or stores for flyers that announce meetings of these groups.
- Meet with Family Service staff members or talk with friends and co-workers.
- Ask co-workers and parents about their memberships in community organizations.
- List the groups that now meet for joint training, to provide collaborative services, or to discuss common goals.

Discuss Partnerships

3. Hold another coaching session to discuss community partnerships. Explain that staff from individual programs can plan initiatives, such as a parent information night or summer home visits, that help smooth transitions. However, more far-reaching transition practices, such as coordinating curricula or transition planning meetings, require community partnerships.

Network

4. Help participants choose one of the groups researched in Step 2 with which to begin building partnerships. Ask participants to attend one meeting of the group to get to know potential partners or invite a member to visit one of their program's social events. Refer to *Program Profiles*, located in the **Informational Resources** section, to learn more about establishing partnerships with parents and other professionals.

Foster Partnership

5. Meet again to discuss the results of this networking with partners. Discuss the value of making ongoing efforts to network with partners, including parents. Have participants develop a plan to foster the partnership through continued networking and information sharing.

Journey Point

Suggest that participants put their handouts from the activity in their *Journey Bag*. Refer them to *Pocket Guide 3* to list new strategies for networking. Have them share their ideas with someone outside the coaching session.

Activity 3–3: Collaborative Potluck

Purpose: In this activity, participants identify the skills and resources that individuals throughout the early childhood community can offer when collaborating.

Materials:

Handouts 18, 19, and 20
Journey Bag, Pocket Guide 3 (Introduction)
Paper plates, art materials

Prepare a Dish

1. Deliver *Handout 18: Invitation to a Collaborative Potluck Dinner.* Invite participants to bring a *dish* representing a skill or resource that they can bring to the table when people assemble to work toward common goals. Pass out paper plates and art supplies. You can provide the following examples to explain how participants can use the art materials to prepare their *dishes.*

    - Draw a happy face in the middle of the plate to represent an ability to work with others.
    - Stretch rubber bands across the plate to indicate flexibility.
    - Write an e-mail address on the edge of the plate to represent access to Internet sites.

Share Personal Strengths

2. Have participants bring their *dishes* to a central table. Give participants a few minutes to look over the potluck. Compliment the chefs and ask them to share their recipes. Reinforce the idea that everyone has something to contribute to a collaborative effort; like most potluck dinners, the meal is complete when everyone brings his or her best *dish* to the table. Ask:

    - How do participants feel about the potluck? What does it tell them about the community's overall strengths and resources?
    - Is there a favorite dish?
    - Communication should be a main dish; are there other dishes that seem essential to a successful collaborative meeting?

Discuss Collaboration

3. Discuss with the group the possibility of inviting community members to a *real* collaborative potluck dinner or luncheon as a conclusion of the training. Distribute *Handout 19: Recipe for Collaborative Cake.* Explain that the handout summarizes the process of working collaboratively and the importance of knowing about your community's resources. Distribute *Handout 20: Collaborating for Quality* and tell

participants to check off those items that they already do in their community. Ask:

- What do you already do to collaborate in your community?
- What transition goals might better be achieved through collaboration?
- What strategies could help you expand collaborative efforts?

Journey Point

Suggest that participants put the handouts from the activity in their *Journey Bag*. Refer them to the back of *Pocket Guide 3* to list their discoveries about community resources. Suggest that they share this list with staff not present in the workshop.

Activity 3–4: Adapting Promising Practices

Purpose: In this activity, participants develop strategies to use community resources in new ways to meet transition needs.

Materials:
Program Profiles (Informational Resources)
Journey Bag, Pocket Guide 3 (Introduction)

Coach Preparation Notes:

Identifying and contacting key partners is only the first step to effective collaboration. During this coaching activity, participants discuss their experiences with representatives from successful programs.

Describe Initiatives

1. Hold a coaching session to discuss the promising practices found in *Program Profiles*, located in the **Informational Resources** section. Explain that all these programs have achieved continuity for children in transition by collaborating to provide comprehensive services. Point out the variety of program demographics and services represented and review the following program features:

   - Some programs are funded by local initiatives, while others are funded by federal initiatives.
   - Communities have concentrated efforts on specific age groups.
   - A variety of community partners are involved in providing services.

- Specific services and achievements are tailored to each community's needs.

Discuss Community Goals

2. Have participants read the *Program Profiles*, which contain a sampling of promising practices from programs across the country. Ask participants to select a program that addresses a particular category of service (family services, education services, or health services) that they would like to improve in their community. Discuss why this category of service is important in their community and identify the services currently available. Ask:

   - What specific practices do you want to implement?
   - What resources might be required to provide this service?
   - What community partners could contribute their resources and skills to collaboratively provide the service?

Plan Partner Meeting

3. Help participants plan a meeting with a community partner with whom they could adapt and collaboratively implement one of the promising practices described in the *Program Profiles*. Ask participants to find out the suggestions and concerns that their community partners have about implementing this practice.

First Steps

4. Have participants follow through with the partner meeting. Ask participants to record their partner's suggestions and concerns that are discussed during the meeting.

Follow-up Meeting

5. Schedule a follow-up meeting to share the results of the partner meeting. Discuss any new ideas that emerged during the meeting and help participants determine some key questions. Have them call the program contact from the *Program Profiles* to discuss these questions.

Journey Point

Suggest that participants keep all of the *Program Profiles* in their *Journey Bag* so that they can become familiar with and possibly adapt the promising practices, as well as know who to contact for further information. Refer participants to *Pocket Guide 3* to list new strategies for collaborating. Have them share the information in a follow-up partner meeting.

Activity 3–5: What's in Your Journey Bag?

Purpose: In this activity, participants will reflect on the information and resources that they collected during the training activities to establish ideas for facilitating continuity in their communities and sharing valuable information with their co-workers.

Materials:

Journey Bag contents and completed *Pocket Guides* (Introduction)

> **Coach Preparation Notes:**
>
> This activity can be used at the end of any module to review the concepts found in that module.

Discuss the Journey

1. Meet with participants to review the information and resources collected in their *Journey Bag* and the strategies recorded on their *Pocket Guides*. Explain that they will continue on their journey toward effective transition practices as they continue to use the information and ideas.

Review Materials

2. Have participants review all materials in their *Journey Bag* and information recorded on their *Pocket Guides*. Discuss what they discovered during their journey and what destinations they want to reach now that they have made these discoveries. Point out that they can list personal goals on the back of the *Pocket Guide*. Ask them to consider the ways that they might use their information to achieve their goals. Some suggestions include:

   - Sharing information, strategies, and materials with other program staff, parents, and key community partners
   - Using the *Pocket Guides* to list new ideas and review their progress

Meet with Staff

3. Suggest that participants share their strategies and personal goals with co-workers in a team meeting. They can provide some copies of handouts to everyone in the meeting. In addition, they can help each staff member identify his role in helping the program implement effective practices.

Next Steps: Ideas to Extend Practice

The following activities can help participants review key information, practice skills, and assess their understanding of the concepts in this module:

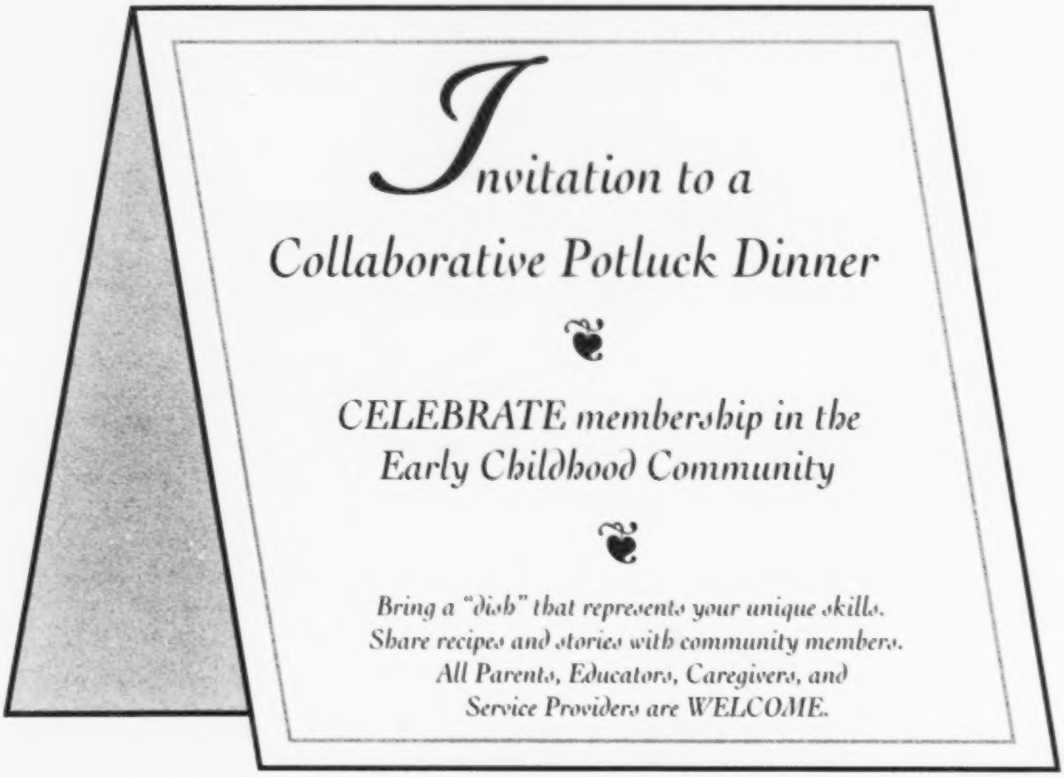
- Plan a variety of monthly strategies for networking with community partners. These might include formal meetings that focus on transition issues or other early childhood issues. You can also plan a variety of informal events such as breakfasts, community celebrations, or bag-lunch information sessions. As contacts are made, keep up-to-date on the efforts partners are making. Find out what you can do to help them.

- Invite leaders from the early childhood community to an informational or discussion program on providing continuity. Select some of the eight elements of continuity as described in the book *Continuity in Early Childhood: A Framework for Home, School, and Community Linkages* to review with the group. Discuss your community practices that relate to those elements and use the framework as an evaluation of those practices. See *Resources*, located in the **Informational Resources** section, for information on ordering this book.

- Test out strategies for school improvement with others from the early childhood community by using the simulation game *Making Change for School Improvement.* Head Start grantees may obtain this resource through their regional office, the Head Start Training and Technical Assistance Network, or Head Start program directors. Schools may find that their district has invested in the game. Refer to *Resources*, in the **Informational Resources** section, for ordering information.

- Give participants several months to try out their strategies for networking and collaborating. Schedule a follow-up meeting with individuals or small groups. At the follow-up meeting, have participants share what they have tried and any difficulties they may be having. Discuss additional strategies that they can try and involve them in role playing to help improve their communication skills. Provide them with materials from the **Informational Resources** section to support the development of new transition practices.

Handout 18: Invitation to a Collaborative Potluck Dinner



Invitation to a
Collaborative Potluck Dinner

❦

CELEBRATE membership in the
Early Childhood Community

❦

Bring a "dish" that represents your unique skills.
Share recipes and stories with community members.
All Parents, Educators, Caregivers, and
Service Providers are WELCOME.

Handout 19: Recipe for Collaborative Cake

Recipe adapted from: Kentucky Head Start Collaboration Project

Collaborative Cooking Serves ALL

Needed Ingredients:

Planning
Participants
Agreement/Consensus
Time
Coordination
Commitment

Step 1—Planning
Acquaint yourself with agencies, businesses, community programs, school services, policies, and limitations. At this point you are working on your guest list. Represent your program well and offer to assist with existing programs. Select appropriate organizations that have or are willing to develop similar interests and goals. Early identification of the resources available and the gaps must be a top priority.

Step 2—Participants
This mixture must be blended gently, no beating necessary. Dissolve any preconceived ideas about agencies and individuals. Each must be given enough time to blend together, to slowly enhance the flavor of the group with programs, ideas, and individualism. Remember, all dishes are more appetizing when garnished well. Garnish participants with well-deserved recognition and praise. Respect each participant's limitations; as you know, you can't make a silk purse from a sow's ear.

Step 3—Agreement/Consensus
Substitute "can't be done" with consensus building and agreement. Even with clearly defined goals, there will be disagreement throughout the process due to human nature. One must try to "sweeten the pot" by agreeing that disagreements are not anyone's fault. This is a time when hearty helpings of consideration and wearing the shoe on the other foot are necessary. This is a group decision, not an individual one. People need to refrain from roasting another individual, stewing because they did not get their way, becoming boiling mad when not controlling emotions, or getting in a pickle by taking things in a personal nature in any way.

Step 4—Time
Simply put—too little time and the project will never get done; too much time and the project will dry out and be tossed in the garbage. Set times that are convenient for the participants. Respect commitments and job responsibilities of all involved. Allow for each organization and agency to have time to share. Everyone likes a piece of the pie. Keep meetings focused—begin and end on time. This is a long-term mission, not a one-time, one-hour meeting.

Step 5—Coordination
Participants can add their contribution of services to the cake. It is important to remember that everyone can add something. Develop attitudes where everyone wants to add equal amounts without pressure. If one or two try to supply all the items, the cake may be bland. Flavor the recipe with everyone's help and ideas. Should there be several different cakes mixing, find a big oven to combine and feed the multitudes, not one or two.

Step 6—Commitment
This is the icing on the cake. Make it thick and rich. Allow everyone to share in preserving and helping children and youth. A volunteer to maintain the order of the clothing closet can be as beneficial and rewarding as the corporate gift.

Adapted from **Collaborative Cooking Serves All** by Ann Stewart, Preschool/Head Start Director, and Janet Compton, Family Resource/Youth Services Center, Bourbon Schools, funded by the Kentucky Head Start Collaboration Project, 1993.

Handout 20: Collaborating for Quality

Joint transition planning for programs

☐ Develop written program plans clarifying responsibilities of all partners.
☐ Identify common transition goals and steps to collaborate to accomplish goals.
☐ Incorporate timelines for short-term and long-term goals.
☐ Identify resources that can be accessed.
☐ Collaborate in implementing jointly developed activities, policies, and initiatives.
☐ Evaluate the impact of the transition plan on meeting the needs of the community.
☐ Support transition planning and implementation by forming interagency agreements.

Joint transition planning for individual children

☐ Share information in formal meetings with all partners, including parents.
☐ Identify competencies and supports available to the child/family in transition.
☐ Identify services and supports that can be accessed during transition.
☐ Modify existing strategies to accommodate any special needs of the child/family.
☐ Collaborate to develop specific strategies for transitioning each individual child.

Administrative support of collaboration

☐ Form interagency agreements.
☐ Provide time for staff to participate in collaborative efforts.
☐ Designate one person to take responsibility for transition planning.
☐ Involve administrators and policy makers in the collaboration.

Joint efforts to improve quality of education, care, and services for young children

☐ Pool funding and resources to improve programs and implement new initiatives.
☐ Involve the entire community in campaigns to improve quality.
☐ Advocate public policies and funding to serve children and families.
☐ Develop joint training activities that focus on best practices.
☐ Evaluate community resources and coordinate services to avoid duplication of efforts.

Continuing Professional Development

Participants can expand their skills and knowledge by completing coursework, joining local and national organizations, networking with other early childhood professionals, and reading current literature.

Continuing Education

Many universities and community colleges offer child development courses through their education, child development, or psychology departments. Courses in business and communication can enhance the communication and networking skills necessary for the success of collaborative efforts. To find out about courses in your area, call local colleges for catalogs and admission information.

For an extensive list of educational conferences sponsored by national and local organizations, call or write:

ACCESS ERIC
1600 Research Boulevard, MS–5F
Rockville, MD 20850
1–800–LET–ERIC

The cost for a printed copy is $20. A free online listing appears on the Internet at: http://www.aspensys.com/eric2/welcome.html

Educational Associations

Educational organizations are often associated with a particular profession. Participants and programs that choose to join several national or local educational organizations will broaden their understanding of the various goals within the early childhood community. Several national organizations follow:

Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development
1250 N. Pitt Street
Alexandria, VA 22314–1453
1–703–549–9110

Publication: *Educational Leadership*
Membership: Leaders in elementary, middle, and secondary schools; and anyone interested in curriculum, instruction, supervision, and leadership in schools

Council for Exceptional Children
1920 Association Drive
Reston, VA 20191–1589
1–703–620–3660

Publications: *Exceptional Children, Teaching Exceptional Children*
Membership: Teachers, administrators, parents, and students

National Association for the Education of Young Children
1509 16th Street, NW
Washington, DC 20036–1426
1–202–232–8777, 1–800–424–2460

Publication: *Young Children*
Membership: Teachers, parents, child care providers, and others interested in improving the quality of services for children birth through age eight

National PTA
330 N. Wabash Avenue, Suite 2100
Chicago, IL 60611–3690
1–312–670–6782

Publications: *PTA Today, What's Happening in Washington*
Membership: Parents, teachers, students, and citizens active in their schools and communities

Internet Resources

The Internet provides extensive resources for educators, child care providers, service providers, parents, and students. The resources available include online publications developed by national organizations, database searches for parents and professionals, information about curricula and resource materials that can be ordered, online government documents, online journals and popular magazines, discussion groups, and interactive bulletin boards.

Participants interested in learning more about accessing and using the Internet can be referred to the ERIC Clearinghouse on Elementary Education and Early Childhood Education. The clearinghouse resources include two ERIC Digests, *Internet Starting Points for Early Childhood Educators* and *The Internet and Early Childhood Educators: Some Frequently Asked Questions*. The clearinghouse also has an in-depth guide to educational resources on the Internet called *A to Z: The Early Childhood Educator's Guide to the Internet*. For more information:

- Call: 1–800–583–4135
- E-mail: ericeece@ux1.cso.uiuc.edu

Promising Practices

One of the best ways for participants to expand their understanding of effective transition practices is to visit a community program site where these practices are being implemented. By contacting staff with first-hand experience in implementing promising practices and by becoming familiar with the many possibilities for collaboration, participants can identify strategies that best fit their own program needs.

Continuing Professional Development

Materials developed by the Offices of Educational Research and Improvement Regional Laboratories (OERI Labs) provide participants with up-to-date information to assist in the development of local initiatives. To find out about OERI Labs, Head Start Transition Demonstration Projects, or Head Start—State Collaboration Projects in your area, contact your Regional Head Start Office or the State Department of Education. Refer to *Program Profiles* in the **Informational Resources** section for additional contacts and resources.

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Informational Resources: Overview

The **Informational Resources** section of the training guide *Effective Transition Practices: Facilitating Continuity* is designed to be used with the workshop and coaching activities in the Skill-Based Training section. This section can also be used outside the training sessions as quick reference materials for those seeking transition-related information and examples of promising program practices.

Digests, Program Profiles, Hands-on Activities, and *Resources* are included in this section. The variety of materials can help prepare trainers and assist all staff in implementing effective transition practices for young children and families in their programs. A description of each of the four categories along with suggestions for using the materials follows.

Digests

Each digest summarizes fundamental information on the topics of transition, change, continuity, and support. The brief articles reflect current research and express a consensus of expert views on transition issues. Consider using these articles in the following ways:

- Read in preparation for training sessions
- Summarize and share information with training participants as directed in the Introductory Activity, and Activities 1–4, 1–5, 2–1, and 2–3
- Reproduce and disseminate to interested participants in additional training sessions
- Reprint in community and school newsletters
- Share with parents during parent meetings
- Share with administrators and other school and community officials to establish a baseline for discussing transition issues

Program Profiles

This section provides an overview of promising practices that were developed and implemented by model programs, local communities, and nonprofit organizations. Profiles of transition programs from both within and outside of Head Start are included. These examples reflect the diverse nature of programs throughout the country. Consider using these resources in the following ways:

- Disseminate in Activities 3–2 and 3–4
- Disseminate as supplemental material in additional training sessions
- Share with administrators and community leaders as examples of programs with continuity
- Adapt ideas for use in your own community
- Contact programs and learn more about their *first steps*
- Share with program staff so they understand the many facets of program continuity

Informational Resources: Overview

Hands-on Activities

This section offers examples of concrete transition activities for individuals to try in their own programs or homes. The materials provide guidance to those who would like to initiate new practices. All staff and parents can become involved in providing support to children and families. The *Hands-on Activities* assist them in identifying effective strategies for children at different developmental levels. In addition, there are procedures for developing parent and child programs. Consider these suggestions for use:

- Distribute to training participants and use as directed in Activities 1–5, 2–4, and 2–5
- Disseminate as supplemental material in other training sessions
- Disseminate to program staff who are developing new transition activities
- Publish in school and community newsletters
- Share ideas with key partners in transition, including parents

Resources

This list of additional resource materials includes books, journal articles, videotapes, and other documents. Information for obtaining these resources is also included. Suggestions for use include:

- Obtain and read materials that provide more information about change, transition, and continuity
- Share list with participants in training sessions to further their professional development in transition
- Use materials listed as additional resources during training and program development

A Child's Emerging Coping Abilities

What Is Coping?

Coping is the process of adapting to meet personal needs and to respond to the changing demands of the environment. Each child's needs vary according to his developmental skills, age, and presence of a disability or other special need. The goal of coping is to increase feelings of well-being in threatening or challenging situations. Children cope with situations in order to feel good about themselves and their place in the world.

Coping and Learning

The more effectively a child copes, the more effectively she learns. Adaptive competence is determined by the match between demands placed on the child and the resources he has to manage those needs. Successful coping reflects sufficient internal and external resources for handling the demands of daily life and adult expectations of the child.

External Supports

Human and environmental supports need to be available to the child before she can develop coping capacity. The family provides the foundation for each child to build her own internal resources. Loving, responsive, consistent care, along with encouraging feedback, helps the child develop trust, security in the predictability of events, and an expectation of success. Other external resources include food, financial provision, shelter, clothing, and a stimulating environment that promotes curiosity and development.

Internal Supports

The developmental skills and individual strengths that a child possesses can be important internal supports. As the child's abilities and experiences increase, he gradually develops a sense of self. Coping is related to the child's perceived ability to have an effect on others and a sense of trust that adults will respond to the child's needs. These beliefs are related to the quality of attachment between a child and a caregiver. These skills and beliefs contribute to the child's adaptive competence.

Support Levels

Children at every level of development have to cope with stress. They cope with changes related to physical growth, the complexities of family life, and new experiences. In addition to normal stresses, many children must cope with multistressed environments. Knowledge about the demands an individual child must cope with is essential in setting appropriate expectations during a period of transition. The amount of support needed will depend on the developmental needs and capacity of the child to cope with change and specifically, with the demands of the new situation. Viewing the child's ability to cope as a capacity that develops over time and with adult support can ease transitions.

Adapted with permission from Williamson, G.G., "Assessment of Adaptive Competence" in *ZERO TO THREE*, Vol. 14, No. 6. ZERO TO THREE: National Center for Infants, Toddlers, and Families (1994).

Transition to Kindergarten

Parents, teachers, and other caregivers often have questions and concerns about preparing children for kindergarten. They wonder what children need to succeed in school and how they can help make sure children are ready for school.

What characteristics help children succeed?

Parents and teachers are similarly concerned about the characteristics that prepare children for transition into kindergarten and for ongoing school success. Findings from a national study reveal that parents and teachers agree that the ability to communicate is one of the most important indicators of school success. Besides communication skills, teachers identify enthusiasm and curiosity as critical characteristics that children need when entering kindergarten (United States Department of Education Office of Educational Research and Improvement 1993). Parents believed that certain academic skills and the ability to pay attention were important, too.

Current research on school readiness stresses the importance of the characteristics that parents and teachers cited in the survey. When considering all the domains in child development, several characteristics emerge as predictors of successful kindergarten experiences and general school success. These include the ability to interact positively with peers in a group and to communicate with peers and adults in the home and school environments. In addition, it is important for children to be familiar with the concepts in the school curriculum (Katz 1990).

Why are these skills important?

From the time they take their first step into a new classroom, children are expected to learn new rules, make new friends, and cooperate with adults. Thus, before entering kindergarten, it is important that children have had many opportunities to develop social skills and take direction from caregivers (Katz 1991).

How can teachers and families help children develop these skills?

When parents and prekindergarten teachers provide opportunities for social interaction, they facilitate a child's adjustment to kindergarten (Katz and McClellan 1991). Through peer interaction and adult guidance in conflict resolution, children gain a sense of self and begin to develop the skill of taking the perspective of another person. Through these play experiences, children develop communication and social skills that they use when adjusting to new environments (Oden 1987).

What else makes transitions easier?

The relationship between the teaching philosophy of a child's preschool and a new school also significantly affects the transition process (Maxwell and Eller 1994). The more similarity there is between a child's preschool program and the kindergarten program, the smoother the transition to kindergarten (United States Department of Education Office of Educational Research and Improvement 1993).

Children have a natural disposition to learn. Early childhood educators enhance this motivation when they design a curriculum that engages children in activities that help them develop cognitively, socially, emotionally, and physically. Classroom activities must also allow each child to develop at his own rate (Nurss 1987). Thus, developmentally appropriate curriculum practices in preschool and kindergarten (small group learning, hands-on experiences with concrete materials, and child-led activities) greatly reduce the stress that children experience in school (Maxwell and Eller 1994).

Overall, children are best prepared for kindergarten if they develop a repertoire of social skills for interacting with other children and adults. Additionally, the transition is easier when there is continuity between previous and current school curricula that matches children's developmental levels. Children will flourish when teachers and parents provide a supportive, yet challenging environment, and view kindergarten as a time for children to learn about themselves, others, and their surroundings.

For Further Reading

Katz, L.G. 1987. *What Should Children Be Learning?* Urbana, IL: ERIC Clearinghouse on Elementary and Early Childhood Education.

Katz, L.G. 1991. *Readiness: Children and Schools.* Urbana, IL: ERIC Clearinghouse on Elementary and Early Childhood Education.

Katz, L.G. and Diane McClellan. 1991. *The Teacher's Role in Children's Social Development.* Urbana, IL: ERIC Clearinghouse on Elementary and Early Childhood Education.

Maxwell, Kelly L. and Susan K. Eller. 1994. *Children's Transitions to Kindergarten.* Young Children 49: 56–63.

National Center for Education Statistics. 1993. *Readiness for Kindergarten: Parent and Teacher Beliefs.* Washington, DC: U.S. Department of Education.

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Beyond Transition: Ensuring Continuity in Early Childhood Services[1]

In the early childhood field, the word *transition* is used in many different ways. Traditionally, *transition* has been used to describe the period of time that falls between two different types of activities. *Transition* may also be used to describe the time period in which children move from home to school, from school to after-school activities, from one activity to another within a preschool, or from preschool to kindergarten. In each case, early childhood professionals have been concerned with easing the transition between two different types of activities or environments.

Continuity: A Concept Revisited

With more and more children participating in early childhood programs before they enter school, there is an increasing focus on the transition that occurs when children move from preschool to kindergarten. Many children have problems adjusting to elementary school programs that have a different philosophy, teaching style, and structure than those programs in which they participated during their earlier years. Transition efforts were designed to help ease the entry into school by preparing both children and families for the differences children will encounter.

But more recently, there has been a growing consensus that the key to effective services for young children is less through bridging the gap between different types of programs, and more through ensuring continuity in certain key elements that characterize all good early childhood programs. This notion of continuity is not new. In the late 1960s and early 1970s, efforts such as Project Developmental Continuity and Follow-Through were designed to ensure that the principles of good early childhood programs continued into the early years of elementary school. But today's concept of continuity has changed in several respects. First, there is now much more consensus in the field regarding what constitutes appropriate practice in all types of early childhood programs from infancy through the primary grades. There is also growing recognition that parent involvement is a key to a child's success and should be encouraged as children move on to elementary school. Finally, the need for supportive services for both children and families has intensified. Comprehensive family support and health services are critical components throughout the early years.

Towards Continuity: Three Key Elements

If programs are to provide effective early childhood services throughout children's early years, they must share at least three characteristics: developmentally appropriate practice, parent involvement, and supportive services for children and families.

Developmentally Appropriate Practice. Continuity across early childhood services is facilitated by the degree to which all programs are developmentally appropriate. Naturally, the setting, age range, and abilities of the children will differ across programs. As children progress from preschool to kindergarten and on to the primary grades, they show increased motor and language skills, they can pay attention longer, they can play more cooperatively, and they are more able to develop interests that go beyond their immediate surroundings. Throughout the preschool and early elementary years, children learn best through active exploration of their environment and through interactions with adults, other children, and concrete materials that build on earlier experiences.

Programs for young children should not be seen as either play-oriented or academic. Rather, developmentally appropriate practice, whether in a preschool or a primary classroom, should respond to the natural curiosity of young children, reaffirm a sense of self, promote positive dispositions towards learning, and help build increasingly complex skills in the use of language, problem solving, and cooperation.

Parent Involvement. One hallmark of any successful early childhood program is the degree to which it involves parents. Such involvement should not stop when children reach the schoolhouse door. Good schools for young children welcome family members in ways that go well beyond traditional parent activities such as fundraising and annual parent-teacher conferences. Ongoing communication between parents and teachers has become increasingly important. Parents

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[1] Lombardi, Joan. *Beyond Transition: Ensuring Continuity in Early Childhood Services.* ERIC Clearinghouse on Elementary and Early Childhood Education. University of Illinois, Urbana, Ill. 1992.

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can be involved as decision makers, volunteers, and staff. They can participate in parent education and support groups, be encouraged to observe the classroom, and, in general, take a more active role in their child's education both at school and at home.

Schools also need to respond to the diversity among families. Parent activities need to be responsive to the language and culture of the family and be tailored to meet specific needs of teen parents, single parents, working parents, blended families, and families with special service needs. Given the increasing number of working parents with young children, employers can be supportive of parent involvement by providing release time for parent participation and by initiating policies that support work and family life.

Supportive Services. Effective early childhood programs, particularly those for low-income families, need to respond to the comprehensive needs of children and families for health care, child care, and other family supports. Traditionally, schools have not played a role in ensuring that such services are provided. Yet there is a growing recognition that schools are the natural hub for child and family services. New relationships between school and other health and human service providers are emerging as comprehensive services are integrated into public education.

Supportive services that include school and parent representation promote collaborative processes and community development. The uniting of school and community resources and concerns, and the clear recognition of the fact that the school is embedded in its community, sustain healthy environments and contribute greatly to continuity for children and families.

Conclusion

Traditional notions of transition, which focus on bridging the gaps between different types of early childhood programs, are changing. Because we now know that young children learn in similar ways throughout the early years, all programs in the community should adhere to developmentally appropriate principles from infancy through the primary grades. In addition, parent involvement, family support, and linkages to health services, which often characterize preschool programs, should continue into the early years of elementary school. It is through the continuity of such services, in and out of the classroom, that we will eventually move beyond a concern for transition and ensure continuous and effective services throughout the early years.

For More Information

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National Association of State Boards of Education. *Caring Communities: Supporting Young Children and Families.* Alexandria, Virginia: National Association of State Boards of Education, 1991.

"Position Statement: Guidelines for Appropriate Curriculum Content and Assessment in Programs Serving Children Ages 3 through 8." *Young Children* 46 (March, 1991): 21–38.

Continuity of Care and the Importance of Relationships

Young children need environments that offer security, protection, and intimacy. When they have a continuing relationship with a caregiver and are in a setting that promotes close relationships with other children and with parents, they develop a positive sense of self and social skills. As programs focus on the continuation of these relationships over time, children and family needs are more easily met. In addition, caregivers experience more job satisfaction and less stress.

Two vignettes adapted from *ZERO TO THREE's Heart Start: The Emotional Foundations of School Readiness* (1992) illustrate the difference a special relationship can make to a young child's experience in child care.

Impersonal Caregiving:
Tim stood just inside the entrance to the playroom. He was sturdy for one-and-a-half, but short. The noise was jarring, and he looked around for the woman his mother talked to when they came in. She had said to his mother, "He'll be fine—I'll get him started," and she had taken his hand. But now, just as fast, she was gone. It scared him as much as the other time. This was not a good place to be. He wanted his mother, and he wanted to go home. A boy bumped him hard, and Tim fell. He crawled over to the woman. He sat down and fingered some colored blocks on the floor. A big boy came and grabbed one and stepped on his hand. Tim yelped and cried and looked around. He held his hurt hand in the other and the tears ran down his cheeks. No one saw.

Two weeks later:
Tim stood just inside the entrance to the playroom. It was very noisy. A boy ran past him and bumped him. Tim lunged for him and pushed him down. The boy cried, and Tim walked over to the blocks.

He picked some up, and a bigger boy came and grabbed them. Tim gave them up quickly and then turned and saw that a smaller boy had some. He pulled them away from him. The boy cried. Tim looked at the blocks. He couldn't remember what he'd been doing with them, so he threw them down. They made a very satisfying sound. He picked up several other toys nearby and threw them. Suddenly one of the women was there yelling at him and holding his arm very hard. She was saying lots of things to him, and now she said, "time out," and scrunched him on a stool. He tried to get up but she wouldn't let him. She waved a finger in his face. He thought about biting it. She went away. He didn't like this place. He wanted his mother. He wanted to go home.

What Tim is learning in this child "care" center is almost everything we would not want him to learn. He is important to no one here and must fend for himself, as must others. For some, it is like home—for others it is newly terrible. For all, it is a potentially damaging experience.

Mindy the Primary Caregiver:
Tim and his mother had visited the center twice in the last week. They had spent time with Mindy, who told them she would be Tim's primary caregiver. Both Tim and his mother felt comfortable with Mindy. She was interested in them, wanted to talk regularly about Tim's progress, and seemed to understand how Tim's mother felt about leaving Tim to go to work. To Tim, today felt much the same, but his mother knew she was going to leave him for several hours and had told him so. Mindy met them at the door, squatted down to speak to Tim, who smiled shyly, remembering her, and then walked with his mother and him to the small rocking horse that Tim had so enjoyed the last time.

A small boy rushed by and bumped Tim quite hard. Mindy caught the little boy and talked quietly to him, introduced him to Tim, and sent him on his way. Tim got on the horse and Mindy sat nearby where a somewhat bigger girl was building with blocks and a boy was working with large puzzle pieces. Mindy attended to all of them in turn as they wanted her attention or help. These were her three, and she always kept a special eye on them.

When it was time for her to go, Tim's mother reminded him she was leaving today. He looked surprised and *climbed off the horse. Mindy picked him up and said, "Let's go to the door and say goodbye to your mother." Tim wanted to go with his mother. But his mother really seemed to be leaving him, so he clung closer to Mindy, who cuddled him and talked quietly. Then his mother was gone. It was like everyone in the world was holding their breath at the same time, but Mindy held him and patted him and talked quietly. Then everyone began to breathe again. Tim could see the toys and children, but mostly he liked hearing Mindy's voice. Ten minutes later, Tim was on his horse. He wasn't as wholly confident as twenty minutes before, but he could still ride, and Mindy was close by, always noticing when he looked at her.*

Two weeks later:

After his mother kissed him, Tim waved goodbye and said, "Hi" again to Mindy who ruffled his hair. Tim made a beeline for the block area, but when he got there Wong Chen had corralled all of the red blocks Tim wanted. Tim squatted down and watched Wong Chen. In a minute, Mindy came over and squatted down too, and they both watched him. Mindy said, "Tim likes those blocks too, Wong Chen; would you let him play?" Wong Chen looked at the floor, and then at Tim. Mindy said, "OK, Wong Chen, then Tim can use them later." And then to Tim, while pointing to some bristle blocks, "Maybe you'd like these? I don't think anyone has those." As Tim started to walk away, Wong Chen handed him one red block. Mindy said, "Thank you, Wong Chen, we'll use that."

... Later, Tim started to build a big car with red blocks, a car like his mother's red car. His mother was working. She would come later. "Mommy later," Tim said. Mindy heard him. "She will, Tim," said Mindy. "She'll come after your nap." "After nap," said Tim, and then he said, "See my car?"

Tim is learning a lot in this center, mostly very good things. He feels important. He feels heard and understood. He feels protected, and his primary caregiver helps him negotiate the difficult things with other children. He is learning to cooperate and pay attention to what other children need and want. There is enough space, there are enough providers, just enough children, and abundant affection for everyone.

Adapted with permission from Lally, J.R., Y.L. Torres, and P.C. Phelps, "Caring for Infants and Toddlers in Groups: Necessary Considerations for Emotional, Social, and Cognitive Development" in *ZERO TO THREE*, Vol. 14, No. 5. ZERO TO THREE: National Center for Infants, Toddlers, and Families (1994).

Program Profiles: Overview

Promising Practices

When we think of transitions in schools, we usually think of the movement of children between activities and classes. In recent years, funds from governmental, private, and nonprofit agencies enabled early childhood educators and administrators to redefine transitions to include children's passage between early learning and care environments.

In 1991, the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services' Administration for Children, Youth and Families funded thirty-two Head Start Early Childhood Transition Demonstration Projects. One goal of these projects was to form partnerships between Head Start and the public schools to pave the way for smoother transitions for children. Other sources of funding for transition programs include grants from private foundations; pooling of federal, state, and local resources; and collaborations between Head Start and state early childhood agencies.

Early childhood transition programs are tailored to serve the school, child care providers, and the larger community. The programs have many unique features and each profile highlights the creativity and cooperative spirit of individuals who work with families in transition. The *promising practices* from a sampling of programs across the country demonstrate the importance of involving administrators, frontline staff, and families. Examples of effective practices follow:

Administration Involvement

- Interagency agreements provide a foundation for pooling funding streams, sharing teaching materials, and planning joint training for public school staff and the local child care community.
- Administrators actively participate in parent nights and special events. They are accessible and have an ongoing working relationship with parents and parent groups.
- Regular meetings are scheduled to facilitate communication between Head Start and public school staff.
- Administrators provide staff leave time for joint transition training and visits to public schools and early childhood programs in the community.
- Transition coordinators serve as liaisons between feeder programs and the public schools.
- The school curriculum is planned to build on a child's previous experience and current developmental level.
- The administrator designates space in the school, assigns personnel, and forms partnerships with community agencies to provide health and social service support to families as needed.

Program Profiles: Overview

Family Involvement

- Families are consulted at each stage of the transition process and are actively involved in making informed decisions about their children's education. Transition information packets are available for all families.
- Returning parents serve as mentors for families entering schools for the first time. Veteran parents accompany teachers, care providers, and support service personnel on home visits.
- Informal special events serve as ice breakers for families. Events include family field days, pizza parties, and theme-based activity nights. Education, care, and support service personnel attend special events and distribute information to families.
- Schools provide transportation for children and families to attend special events and supplemental programs. Child care is provided during evening family meetings.
- Family rooms and drop-in centers are housed in the schools. The family room offers parenting resources; adult education classes; and a comfortable, welcoming space.
- Family Service workers and their counterparts are assigned to families throughout their participation in the transition program.

Teacher, Caregiver, and Health and Social Services Staff Involvement

- Head Start personnel communicate with public school teachers about Head Start practices.
- Teachers consult with colleagues about the curriculum and grade-level expectations.
- Teachers and caregivers prepare children for transitions to and from their programs using books, dialogue, field trips, and family activity packets.
- Teachers make home visits before the school year begins.
- Support service personnel in Head Start meet with their counterparts in the public school on a regular basis. For example, health specialists meet with school nurses and family service coordinators meet with school counselors.

Wisconsin Head Start Transition Project

Address:	CESA 5 626 East Slifer Street Portage, WI 53901	Renewal Unlimited P.O. Box 77 135 Linn Baraboo, WI 53913
Contact:	Julia Herwig/Carola Pförtner Project Director/Coordinator	Linda Young Executive Director
Phone:	(608) 742–8811	(608) 356–8764
Program Type:	National Head Start–Public School Transition Demonstration Project	
Funding Source:	Federal	
Population:	Families with children in kindergarten through third grade and their teachers	
Location:	Eight rural school districts (4 program and 4 comparison) in central Wisconsin	

Transition Resources:

This program can be replicated via a variety of materials, resource guides, and training.

Family Services

- Strength-based Family Service Plans through *Family Resource Mapping*. Identifies family strengths/resources, and facilitates access to community resources.
- *Thematic Family TUBs* for home visits, designed to foster parent-child interaction and family growth in the areas of education, health, and family routines.
- *Counseling Track* (Solution Focused/Brief Counseling) of up to eight home visits with families experiencing multiple stressors.
- *Learning Track* for children identified as academically at risk by family or teachers; includes classroom consultations, tutoring, and in-home learning visits.
- *F.A.S.T.* (Families and Schools Together), a collaborative family outreach and prevention program to address family resilience, parent-child, and family-school relationships.

Education Services

- Family Involvement activities include family story hours, coffee meetings, open houses, health fairs, family nights, governing board, and joint planning at teacher institute. Volunteer/tutor coordination programs to facilitate family and community involvement.

- Teacher consultants to support developmentally appropriate practices as part of a common learning philosophy between Head Start and public schools.

- An Annual Summer Transition Institute including families and administrators. Also an administrative institute.

- Communication cycles for school change include cross-grade teacher meetings, Authentic Assessment Committees, and Educational Advisory Committees.

Community Collaborations and Health Services

- Interagency collaboration through monthly youth councils, case management, and family resource mapping.

- Joint activities such as F.A.S.T., community health fairs, and intergenerational programs.

- Local service providers (fire department, police, health providers) participate in story hours in libraries and schools.

- Collaborative monthly newsletter to 1,600 family, school, and community team members in areas of family, community, health, and education.

Achievements

- Families increase awareness and utilization of resources in school and community to meet family-identified goals in the areas of family enhancement, education, and health after transitioning from Head Start to public schools.

- Classrooms increasingly implement developmentally appropriate strategies.

- Schools demonstrate increased awareness of family-identified needs and resources.

- Resource guides and training materials for replication of transition activities.

Project Educational Impact (PEI)

Address: Alpena Public Schools
2373 Gordon Road
Alpena, MI 49707

Contact: Jane Guyott, Program Director

Phone: (517) 356–0485

Program Type: Local initiative, foundation and grant funded

Funding Source: W.K. Kellogg Foundation
Community Foundation for Northeast Michigan
Michigan Children's Trust Fund

Population: Families with young children from birth through five years. The program has expanded to incorporate services through third grade.

Location: Activities are currently carried out in three elementary buildings of Alpena Public Schools, Alpena, Michigan, as well as through home visits. (Plans are to expand to the remaining seven elementary buildings.)

Transition Resources:

Family Services

- Parent mentors—parents with children in the school—are paired with new parents (if needed) in the school community to offer guidance and support as well as to answer questions.
- Monthly home visits (more if needed) by trained Home Visitors introduce parent-child activities and educational games to families that are developmentally appropriate.
- Free monthly family dinners bring parents and children into the school environment in a non-traditional, non-threatening way. Child care is provided and transportation is arranged if necessary.
- Quality parenting information is provided at the family dinners by professionals from the community.

Program Profiles

Education Services

- Communication with the school community begins before children are enrolled in kindergarten at age five or six. Eligibility and contact begin at birth.
- Children become comfortable with the school setting through attendance at the monthly family nights.
- Children become familiar with eating in the cafeteria. They also ride the school bus before school starts.
- Each family receives a notebook on child development and parenting tips. Children also receive educational gifts that are developmentally appropriate.

Community Collaborations and Health Services

- Elementary school, Head Start, Title I, and community support through the foundation now work together with children.
- The local Probate Court and Community Mental Health Department provide services to identified at-risk families and children age six through eight.
- The program is overseen by the Project Educational Success Advisory Board which represents a variety of agencies across the community and region.

Achievements

- Families have favorable attitudes about school, and are comfortable in the school setting and with school personnel.
- Parents are more knowledgeable about child development and age-appropriate activities and expectations.
- Reduced incidents of child abuse.
- Increased parent involvement in their children's education.
- Transition to kindergarten is less stressful for children as shown by less crying at drop-off and lunch.
- Parents form friendships and volunteer to help the school and others.
- Other schools have used the family night as a model for their programs.

Cradle School

Address:	Byck Family Resource Center 2328 Cedar Street Louisville, KY 40212
Contact:	Stephany Hoover
Phone:	(502) 485–8862
Program Type:	Local initiative, federal and local funding
Funding Source:	Federal Magnet Grant for Early Childhood Education. School District System
Population:	Families with children from infancy through four years in urban school district
Location:	Dann C. Byck Elementary School, Louisville, Kentucky

Transition Resources:

Family Services

- The Cradle School is designed as a school-within-a-school for parents to learn while their children prepare for school.
- Families attend parenting skill classes with their infants and toddlers.
- Children aged two to four have separate early childhood learning experiences while their parents attend classes.
- Cradle School parents orient new parents to the elementary school.
- Parents are taught how to work with their children at home to continue the educational process.

Education Services

- Head Start, the Cradle School, pre-kindergarten, and the elementary school all work together to plan programming for children.
- Ungraded kindergarten through third grade, with multi-age grouping.
- Older children are paired with younger *buddies*. Multi-age field trips are offered in each program.

Community Collaborations and Health Services

- Since Head Start, the state pre-kindergarten program, and the Cradle School are located in the same elementary school, parents from all three groups mix for training and workshops.
- The Family Resource Center, located at Byck Elementary School, serves all families in the area.

Achievements

- Parents have become very active in the school and have become liaisons between the community and the school.
- Children whose families are involved with the Cradle School have not been retained in first grade.
- Parents and staff sing together in a chorus, The Mamas and Papas of Byck Elementary, which has performed at statewide educational functions and at school activities.

Project TRANSFER

Address:	Project TRANSFER Community Unit School District #300 300 Cleveland Avenue Carpentersville, IL 60110
Contact:	Linda Kolbusz, Assistant Superintendent, Program Development
Phone:	(847) 426–1300, ext. 313
Program Type:	National Head Start–Public School Transition Demonstration Project
Funding Source:	Integrated funding sources, local, state, and federal
Population:	Racially and ethnically mixed communities with rapidly growing Latino, African-American, low-income, and language minority populations
Location:	Urban, suburban, and rural areas in Carpentersville and Elgin in Northern Kane County thirty miles northwest of Chicago

Transition Resources:

Family Services

- Home visits for over 300 families include short-term and long-term family planning, social services, and education for all family members, and the celebration of developmental milestones.
- Family support, information, intervention, crafts, and Fit n' Trim groups are offered in Spanish and English. Family nights in math, science, and literacy encourage family involvement.
- Families and Schools Together (F.A.S.T.), an eight-week program, strengthens family members' and school staffs' relationships with service agency personnel.
- Family Centers are located in elementary school sites with clothing closets, food pantries, and child care facilities. Lending libraries allow families to borrow books, games, and toys.
- Adult education classes, ESL, GED, and ABE are offered both day and night at elementary schools.

Education Services

- Transition activities allow children, family members, and teachers to meet informally to ensure program continuity and school success.
- Parents, teachers, and staff attend training and workshops together to enhance developmentally appropriate activities for children.

Community Collaborations and Health Services

- Local Governing Board, composed of 51 percent parents and 49 percent school, business, and agency representatives, organizes programs and services to reduce duplication and provide seamless service delivery.
- Comprehensive Wellness Clinics support families by providing immunizations, nutritional information, counseling, WIC coupons, physicals, and other services in a school setting.
- Staff training to assist families in working appropriately with local service providers.
- Local service providers conduct conflict resolution workshops, domestic violence support groups, mental health counseling, and job training in a school setting.
- Child care is provided for parent classes, conferences, and other school/community activities.
- Integrated Program staff help others with promising practices illustrated by activities such as: Transition Maps, Family Mapping System, and the Quilt of Learning Conference.

Achievements

- Infant screening and parent information through the Public Health Department Healthy Moms/Healthy Kids Program to children, and over 525 families. Nutrition counseling to over 370 families through WIC. Immunizations of over 2,652 children and 525 screenings to determine appropriate placement and services for pre-primary children.
- Implementation of developmentally appropriate practices in schools to meet the needs of all children.
- Communitywide planning and commitment to assist children and families in need, while providing continuity in programming.
- Awards/Recognitions: National Governors Association—Governor's Campaign for Children; National Alliance of Business Bronze Community Award for Excellence in Education; Illinois State Board of Education Business Education Partnership Honorable Mention; Illinois Department of Public Health Cornerstone Foundation Award; featured in publications such as *Education Week, Chicago Tribune, Illinois Kids Count 1995, Daily Herald,* and *Northwest Herald.*

Southwest Communication Resources
Infant and Early Childhood Program

Address: Southwest Communication Resources, Inc.
P.O. Box 788
Bernalillo, NM 87004

Contact: Randi Suzanne Malach, Director of Program Services

Phone: (505) 867–3396

Program Type: Local initiative. Began as a foundation-funded project to enhance Southwest Communications Resources' early intervention program. Now all activities are incorporated into early intervention program.

Population: Serves families of diverse cultural backgrounds whose children are developmentally disabled or who have/are at risk for delays in development. These children transition to community Head Start programs (includes seven different Native American tribes and a large native/immigrant Hispanic population).

Location: Family homes, day care centers, and Head Start centers in central New Mexico

Transition Resources:

Family Services

- Family support is an integral part of services provided to families of infants/toddlers with special developmental needs.
- Staff and developmental specialists work with bilingual/bicultural liaison workers to ensure that services are culturally responsive and that native language interpretation is available as needed.
- Because children must transition during the year after their third birthday, staff help families to explore placement options when their child is two years old. The year prior to the transition, families are encouraged to visit Head Start and other placement options. Staff accompany them on visits, and parents are linked to other parents who have already experienced the transition.
- Parent-child group activities are held monthly to facilitate parent-to-parent support in a comfortable and culturally appropriate atmosphere.
- Families are assisted in completing required transition/placement documentation, arranging for testing, and setting up and participating in pre-transition meetings.

Education Services

- Developmental specialists conduct workshops for teachers on how to work more effectively with families and children who have special needs. Videotapes on inclusion (including bilingual/bicultural ones) are used to familiarize Head Start staff with inclusive services in Head Start and other child care settings.

- Children and parents visit and participate in Head Start activities several times before transition. This allows staff and family to identify areas of support that might be needed to ensure successful transition.

- After transition, staff developmental specialists visit the child in Head Start to answer questions and provide child-specific training and technical assistance. Staff also meet with Head Start and school ancillary staff to discuss successful strategies for the child.

Community Collaborations and Health Services

- An interagency agreement was formed between Southwest's Infant-Early Childhood Program, Head Start, and local school districts. This facilitates the provision of coordinated services.

- The Infant-Early Childhood Program, Head Start, and local school districts collaborate with external health and social service agencies to provide an annual Family Health Fair Day: free developmental screening, hearing and vision testing, blood pressure testing, a parade, and food and games.

Achievements

- Head Start staff are more comfortable enrolling and serving children with special health and developmental needs.

- Families are happy that their children receive necessary support services while attending the community Head Start with neighborhood children.

- Interagency coordination of services has resulted in children receiving a more comprehensive program within local communities.

- Parent-to-parent support activities have resulted in parents forming individual support networks that continue even after transition.

Sample Transition Activities:
Infants and Toddlers

Practice Cues, Routines, Activities

What matters most is consistency. Senders, including parents, can share the songs that they use to rock a baby to sleep, a toddler's daily schedule, and favorite activities. Receivers build on these cues, routines, and activities, and pair them with the cues that they use with the group. For example, the new baby's **familiar song** will be sung as he is rocked to sleep in the **special chair** that the caregiver uses to soothe children. A toddler who has had experience coloring with crayons can be offered these **familiar art materials** in the **morning** when babies are sleeping. Children will feel comforted by the familiarity and consistency of the activities. They will begin to associate new cues with old routines so that they eventually know that the special chair means naptime and that morning is art time.

Talk about the Transition

Infants and toddlers cannot anticipate the future. They begin to learn about the sequence of events when verbal cues are paired with actions. Saying *we are going to visit the Early Head Start Center today* will not prepare the child for the new setting. However, if a toddler hears this statement with each visit, he will begin to understand. Infants tune into the tone of voice and the body language of those talking about the transition. Parents who feel good about the new setting can convey this as they hand the infant over to the caregiver and say, *Judy will take care of you today, and I will be back later.*

Test Out New Behaviors

Infants and toddlers will gradually begin to trust a new caregiver and feel secure exploring the environment. By providing many opportunities to get to know the caregiver and the setting, these young children gradually are stimulated to try new things. As infants and toddlers sense that caregivers and their parents are comfortable with each other, they become more comfortable themselves. Parents can be invited to visit the setting frequently before the transition. Receiving staff visit the child in her current setting and in her home. In a transition between classrooms, sending staff and the child visit the receiving classroom frequently. A special services provider can also accompany the child to the new setting. Toys from the new setting can be introduced to the child at home or in a current setting.

Build on Experiences at Home and at the Previous Settings

Bringing toys and special blankets, audio cassettes, and baby equipment from home provides a physical connection to the home. Having photographs of the family in the caregiving setting and allowing the child to take something from the caregiver home provides a connection for the child. Special family-child activities help smooth transitions into the program. A system of regular communication is essential as children transition into a program. It is important to maintain these connections all year.

Hands-on Activities

Show Children that They Belong

Infants and toddlers in mixed age groups enjoy playing next to older children. The older children often are engaged in activities that are not appropriate for infants and toddlers. Child care providers can use a number of techniques to include infants and toddlers in the group. Similar types of age-appropriate materials can be provided for all children at the same time. For example, toddlers can be given playdough while preschoolers and primary school children engage in more complex art activities. Infants can play with soft blocks on the floor while older children use legos on the table. All children can engage in group activities such as taking a walk or hearing a story.

Sample Transition Activities: Preschoolers/Kindergartners

Practice Cues, Routines, Activities

Gradually introduce preschoolers to cues, routines, and activities that will be part of the new setting. New songs, fingerplays, ways to label objects, and procedures for using the bathroom can be introduced before preschoolers move to the new setting. Make sure that you introduce these routines in a developmentally appropriate way. For example, if lining up is part of the next classroom routine, keep in mind that preschoolers have a limited ability to be still and follow directions. Instead of asking all children to line up and wait for their turn at the water fountain, call a limited number of children at a time to line up for their turn. Another strategy is to take a rope with you on an outdoor walk and have the children hold onto it, one behind the other. Make it a challenge to stay together for a short distance. To prepare children for cafeteria style meals, practice using trays to carry toys from one classroom center to another or to clean up the playroom at home.

Talk about the Transition

Tell children about the activities and routines that will continue in the next setting. For example, when children are enthusiastic about singing, tell them that they will sing with their teacher next year, too. A child who is very attached to the cook will be glad to hear that she is also the cook for the three-year-old class and the four-year-old class. Photographs of a child at different stages can help begin a discussion of how the child has been able to learn and do new things as she has been growing and how she has had successful transitions in the past. Kindergartners can visit the preschool to share a photo journal of the things they did in kindergarten. Take pictures of the school buses, the learning centers, and the children when your class visits the new setting. Bring out the pictures and ask questions like: *What do you remember about the visit? Does anyone have a big brother or sister that rides the school bus?Did you see some things that looked the same? What looked different?* Books can be used to help children think and talk about their feelings. After reading a story about a child in transition you can ask the children what the story character was feeling and if they have ever felt that way.

Test Out New Behaviors

Provide props so preschoolers can imagine the new setting by playing kindergarten, pretending to ride the school bus, or pretending to leave their baby sister at home while they go to preschool. Invite older children from the new setting to join in the dramatic play. While they play they can provide information. Suggesting experiences, such as meeting a new friend or playing with a sibling during recess, can provide direction. Monitoring play can help parents and caregivers understand the child's feelings. Puppets can be introduced as the teacher, principal, janitor, cook, and bus driver, and the child can practice interactions with new staff. Children with special needs will especially benefit from practicing the self-help skills needed in the new setting. Cooks can schedule a cafeteria tray day and secretaries can help children learn their phone numbers by practicing calling home in the office. Provide opportunities for children to make new friends by scheduling multiclass activities, inviting playmates home after school, and partnering children with new classmates.

Hands-on Activities

Build on Experiences at Home and at the Previous Settings

Find out all you can about a child's previous experiences. *Who have been the important people in this child's life? What was the child's favorite activity in the previous setting? What does she like to do at home? What language do they speak at home and what are the cultural values of his family?* To get this information, schedule a transition planning meeting before the child enters your program. Ask both the sending caregiver and the family to attend the meeting and tell you about the child. Gain permission from the family to obtain records from the sender and to communicate with them after the transition. Ask them to help you brainstorm ways to help the child adjust to your setting. After the child transfers, refer back to the child's records, and talk with the sender and parents. *What else might help? Is there anything new happening at home that the child might want caregivers to know about?* Encourage parents to volunteer, attend social get-togethers, and communicate regularly. Ask children to share pictures of family and caregivers and portfolios of work from old settings. Help the child send a picture or card to his old setting.

Show Children that They Belong

Preschoolers and kindergartners can learn to find their names in a setting. The more places that they see and hear their names, the more they feel like part of the setting. Sing songs and play games that use children's names. Make name tags, bulletin boards, cubbies, and daily helper charts. Make it easy for a child to reach toys, put things in his cubby, and find his place at the table. Pictures of toys and materials with their names help children know where to find them. When all staff greet children as they enter and take the time to say goodbye, children feel accepted and important. Asking children already in the setting to help you welcome a newcomer or act as a buddy helps them to recognize the child and invite her to play. The new child will also want to know the other children's and staff members' names. Use names frequently so that they become familiar. Children who cannot fully participate in an activity should not be excluded, but should be invited to join the group and given some part in the activity.

Sample Transition Activities: Primary School Children

Practice Cues, Routines, Activities

Assign homework early in the year that integrates the school routines with classroom learning objectives. For example, if children are learning about time, send home the classroom routine and ask parents to help children read the clock at home and add times from their home routine. Begin the school year by clarifying the cues used in the classroom. Do not assume that all students will know what to do when they hear the bell ring or when you ask them to get out their work folder. During the first week or two, check with students during class meetings: *What do we do when the bell rings? Which folder is the work folder? Where do you put finished homework assignments?* Make new rules for the class, the lunchroom, or the school bus only as needed, and discuss the reasons for the rule with the children. Post rules in visible places. Check back to see who knows the rule and can find it on the list. Coordinate the curriculum with other teachers so activities are not all new, and children have time to develop skills through a variety of activities.

Talk about the Transition

The sending teachers and older students can visit children who will be transferring into the next grade to see special projects the younger students have done. They can tell the younger students what projects will be similar next year. Younger children can learn about the next grade by having older students invite them into their classroom to engage in reading partner activities or demonstrate science activities. Involving children in schoolwide activities throughout the year provides time for children to become familiar with all the teachers in the school. When teachers come to school to set up their classrooms in the summer, parents and children can come to meet the teacher and help set up the school. A reception committee can be responsible for introducing newcomers to school staff and other peers.

Test Out New Behaviors

Children who will be assigned homework in the next grade enjoy doing pretend homework with older siblings or peers. Teachers in the sending classroom can help children test out this new behavior by providing developmentally appropriate supplemental learning activities to do at home. Children who will have new responsibilities in the cafeteria or at the bus stop can be paired with an older student for a day or week at the end of the year.

Build on Experiences at Home and at the Previous Settings

Find out about a child's previous experiences. *Who have been important people in this child's life? What does he like to do at home? What language do they speak at home, and what are the values of his family?* Refer to the child's records, portfolio, sending teacher, and parent to understand the child's interests and strengths. Develop activities to encourage children to share home experiences in the classroom. Encourage parents to work as partners with you.

Hands-on Activities

Show Children that They Belong

Children with helping roles in the classroom and the school feel that they belong and that their contributions are important. Many tasks can be rotated to give everyone a role early in the year. Remember that most classrooms will include a mix of children who know each other and those who are unfamiliar with others in the class. Take time to help children get to know and accept each other. Cooperative learning experiences can be developed to allow children with a variety of strengths to work together. Take time to get to know the particular contributions that children with disabilities or other special needs can contribute.

Reading Stories about Transition

Choose a Book

Select a book on transition from the attached list, or talk with a librarian or teacher to identify other books that are helpful with transitions. Look for these features:

Attitudes and feelings about transition

- Transition is not always easy. It is scary and exciting.
- There is much to be proud of as you transition and grow.
- Other children have similar feelings.

Information about transition

- Some things will be the same, and some will be different.
- Parents and staff guide children in a new setting.
- New settings mean new peers and new experiences.

Prepare

Before reading the book with the child, review it thoroughly to be sure you know the story and can answer any questions. Gather information about the new setting so you can give accurate answers to children's questions about what their new program will be like.

Tell the Story

Read the book with the child or group. First ask open-ended questions about what happened in the story. Help children label the feelings of the child in the story. Then expand your discussion with questions like: *What did the child seem worried about in his new school? What helped him feel better?* Show children pictures of the actual setting that they will move to. Ask them if it looks like the setting in the story. *What do they remember seeing when they visited the new school? Does anyone have a brother or sister in that setting? What did they see in the new setting that looks like their current setting? What looks different?*

Discuss the Story

Ask children to think about what they would like to do in the new setting. Draw a picture or write a story about what they want to learn. Put it in their portfolio or mail it to the new program along with a statement about what the child liked best in your setting (with parents' permission).

Make Books Available

Regularly rotate books on transition in your reading corner for children in your program. Provide parents with the list of books or loan those in your collection to families.

Books to Prepare Children for Transition

Author	Title
Alexander	Sabrina
Allard	Miss Nelson Is Missing
Anderson	Carlos Goes to School
Arnold	Where Do You Go to School?
Barkin	I'd Rather Stay Home
Behrens	What I Hear in My School
Breinburg	Shawn Goes to School
Buchmeier	I Know a Teacher
Calmenson	The Kindergarten Book
Cassidy	We Like Kindergarten
Caudill	A Pocket Full of Crickets
Charles	Calico Cat at School
Cohen	The New Teacher
Cohen	No Good in Art
Cohen	When Will I Read?
Cohen	Will I Have a Friend?
Delton	The New Girl at School
Frandsen	I Started School Today
Gordon	Crystal Is the New Girl
Haas	A Special Place for Johnny
Hamilton-Meritt	My First Days of School
Hillert	Who Goes to School?
Holland	First Day of School
Hurd	Come with Me to Nursery School
Isadora	Willaby
Lenski	Debbie Goes to Nursery School
Lystad	Jennifer Takes Over P.S. 94
Marino	Where Are the Mothers?
Mason	I Go to School
Meshover	The Monkey That Went to School
Nichols	Big Paul's School Bus
Oxenbury	First Day of School
Parish	Jumper Goes to School
Quackenbush	First Grade Jitters
Relf	Show and Tell
Rockwell	My Nursery School
Schick	The Little School at Cottonwood Corners
Schwartz	Bea and Mr. Jones
Simon	I'm Busy Too
Steiner	I'd Rather Stay with You
Tobias	The Dawdlewalk
Welbar	Goodbye, Hello
Wittman	The Wonderful Mrs. Trumbly
Wolde	Betsy's First Day at Nursery School

Adapted from *Transition*. Head Start Bureau, U.S. Administration for Children, Youth and Families. Washington, DC, 1988.

Preparing a Newsletter

Objectives

- Parents become more aware of and involved in school or program activities.
- Families can participate in a monthly school activity.
- Program staff can regularly check in with families.
- Families receive information on healthy nutrition, education, community services, parenting, and school involvement.

Procedure

First Steps

- Get supervisor's permission.
- Decide how often to publish newsletter.
- Make sure you have set aside time in your schedule—at least four days per month.
- Talk to teachers and principals to make sure they will participate.
- Inform the parents of what you are doing.

Next Steps

- Pick out the topics and headings you will use in your newsletter.
- Get information from teachers.
- Get information from parents for each newsletter.
- Suggest specific topics.
- Get information from community groups such as:
  - Chamber of Commerce
  - Town hall, village government, city clerk
  - Clubs (Lions, Moose Lodge, Jaycees, women's clubs, etc.)
  - Library
  - University extension office
  - Parks department
  - Check community events postings in stores, post office, banks, etc.
- Develop files with additional information on:
  - Health and safety tips
  - Family activities
  - Promoting self-esteem
  - How to improve study habits/grades
  - Promoting independence
  - Interesting quotes, poems, comics, stories, etc.

Hands-on Activities

Steps for Producing the Newsletter

- Put all the information together. Parents' contributions are *first* priority.
- Have a designated person type it up.
- Proofread.
- Distribute to all families, school staff, and community partners.
- Get information for your next newsletter at least two weeks prior to sending it out.
- Adding artwork to the newsletter helps to break up text and makes it easier to read.

What Makes It Easy

- Supervisor's support
- Teachers who are enthusiastic and willing to be involved
- Principals who are willing to help
- Funds for the program
- Community members willing to talk and give information
- Parents who like to get involved and give information
- Use of a specific person's time to type the newsletter
- Supportive members within agency to offer ideas and help out
- Being flexible enough to change parts of newsletter if needed
- Having some suggested topics for parents who feel they have nothing to contribute

What Makes It Difficult

- Encouraging all to contribute
- Continually finding the right time to talk to teachers and community people

Some Possible Headings for Your Newsletter

- *From the Teachers (or School)*—for teachers to tell about classroom events
- *Pat on the Back*—where anyone can say *thank you* or *good job* to another
- *Helpful Hints*—holiday ideas, household tips, parenting tips
- *Just a Thought*—for sharing something that one has read that was funny or informative
- *For the Family*—ideas for family activities (reading, cooking, writing, playing, etc.)
- *Other*—any topic you want (be sure to represent all community members)
- *Community Events*—what is happening in the community, especially events for the whole family (places and times for immunizations, blood pressure check-ups, etc.)

Adapted from the Wisconsin Head Start Transition Project

Inviting Parents into the Classroom

Objectives

- Introduce and involve parents in school in an informal, comfortable way.
- Have parents meet and socialize with other parents.
- Families will receive information about community services and programs.
- It provides a time for parents to find out about volunteer opportunities within the school.
- Parents will become familiar with child's classroom, school work, teacher, and other school personnel.

Procedure

First Steps

- Get supervisor's and principal's permission.
- Decide how often to have social times.
- Make sure you have set aside enough time in your schedule.
- Suggest idea to other teachers.
- Work with the principal to find a room.
- Set a time and date.

Next Steps

- Coordinate with teachers to display children's classwork.
- Post a volunteer sign-up sheet.
- Invite parents to participate.
- Coordinate the responsibilities of preparation.

Hosting the Social Time

- Send out reminder notes to all the children in the class two days prior to the social.
- Get supplies ready.
  - — Coffee pot, coffee, and something to eat such as rolls or donuts
  - — Pens
  - — Plenty of chairs
  - — Handouts to give out
- Be prepared to talk about the program.
- Get to the room early to set it up.
- Do not disturb any classes.
- Be out of the room on time.

Hands-on Activities

Follow-up Steps

- Remember to thank the presenter for coming!
- Make sure the room is clean.
- Talk with the principal and teacher (when they are free) to see how they thought it went.
- ***Thank*** the teacher and principal (and any other staff that helped).
- Leave any extra food for the teachers.
- Set up a time and date for the next social.
- Be prepared to make changes if something does not go well.

Other Suggestions for the Social

- Have a principal or speaker come in to talk to the parents informally.
- Give out informative handouts.
- Talk about specific topics.

Possible Topics	**Possible Speakers**
Health, first aid, and exercise	County nurse
Discipline	American Heart Association representatives
Study times/habits	Government representatives

What Makes It Easy

- Teachers and principals who are enthusiastic and willing to be involved
- Funds in the program
- Teachers willing to send reminder slips home with the kids
- Morning kindergarten is easier to schedule
- Available space in the school

What Makes It Difficult

- Finding a room (space)
- Setting up a good time for you, the school, the teachers, and the parents

Adapted from the Wisconsin Head Start Transition Project

Sharing Information with Parents

Find out what parents want to know

- Review the attached list of *Questions Parents Have about Kindergarten* to become familiar with the kinds of questions parents have during transition.
- Ask parents in your program what questions they have about the next setting.

Determine the information schools provide

- Determine what information your school district is providing to parents during orientation days.
- Call the schools, talk with former Head Start parents, and review printed materials provided to parents by the schools.

Arrange for additional information to be shared

- Arrange for a speaker to come to your setting to provide more information directly to parents. The speaker might be a principal, former Head Start parent, or kindergarten teacher.
- Inform the speaker what kind of information parents would like to have.
- Include a question and answer period.

Encourage attendance

- Encourage parents to come by making a personal contact as well as providing several notices of the event.
- Serve refreshments and provide child care services for families.

Follow up

- Continue to provide information about the transition to parents both formally and informally.
- Summarize the meeting in your newsletter, distribute handouts to parents who did not attend the session, and pursue any unanswered questions by making additional contacts.

Questions Parents Have about Kindergarten

Who

☐ will be my child's teacher?
☐ do I talk with if my child is having problems?
☐ do I talk with if I do not understand the school policies?
☐ can tell me about the school volunteer program?

What

☐ do I need to buy for my child to go to school?
☐ is my role in the school?
☐ kinds of shots does my child need?
☐ forms do I need to fill out to register my child for school?
☐ after-school and child care programs are available at the school?

Where

☐ will my child go to school?
☐ will the bus pick up my child?
☐ can parents get help and information about parenting?
☐ are special services and bilingual classes offered?

When

☐ does school start?
☐ can we visit the school?
☐ does the law state that my child must attend school?
☐ will my child be tested?

How

☐ can I prepare my child for kindergarten?
☐ will I know what is happening in school?
☐ can I help with homework?
☐ can I meet other parents at the school?

Why

☐ does the school need my child's records?
☐ does my child have to walk (or ride the bus)?
☐ does the school enroll kindergartners for half days (or full days)?

Resources

This training guide introduces readers to concepts, issues, and ideas associated with implementing effective transition practices. The list below includes some resources that can provide additional information and ideas to help implement these practices.

Barbour, Nita H., and Carol Seefeldt. *Developmental Continuity across Preschool and Primary Grades.* Wheaton, MD: Association for Childhood Education International, 1993.

This publication defines developmental continuity and suggests strategies for implementing continuity of organization, curriculum, environment, and evaluation in a school. The book cites examples of projects that have successfully achieved continuity in these areas. To order a copy, call: 1–800–423–3563.

Brammer, Lawrence M. "Coping with Life Transitions." *International Journal for the Advancement of Counseling* (1992): 239–253.

This journal article defines transitions and uses a process-stage model of transition to describe how people react to change. It also describes research-validated coping skills.

Bredekamp, Sue, ed. *Developmentally Appropriate Practice in Early Childhood Programs Serving Children from Birth through Age 8.* Washington, DC: National Association for the Education of Young Children, 1987.

This NAEYC publication summarizes research on the developmental needs of children as they grow from infancy to age eight. This book also describes appropriate and inappropriate practices for children in group care, and includes a special chapter entitled *Transitions: Changes and Challenges.* To order a copy, call: 1–800–424–2460.

Bridges, William. *Managing Transitions: Making the Most of Change.* Massachusetts: Addison-Wesley Publishing, 1991.

This book is a general introduction to transitions, especially those that take place in the workplace. It defines the transition process and suggests exercises for coping with transitions.

Resources

Church, Ellen B. "Getting Ready for Children." ***Early Childhood Today*** **(August/September 1993): 60–67.**

This article offers teachers strategies for preparing the classroom for incoming children. Special sections include creating a welcoming environment for parents, preparing for children with special needs, and examples of external supports needed at different developmental stages. To order a copy, call Scholastic Inc.: 1–800–544–2917.

Copple, C., S. Deich, L. Brush, and S. Hoffreth. ***Learning Readiness: Promising Strategies.*** **Washington, DC: U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, 1993.**

This document provides profiles on programs that are especially successful in preparing children to begin school ready to learn. This survey of national efforts includes preschool, elementary school, secondary school, and multi-age programs. Contact names are included. To order a copy from the Government Printing Office, call: 1–202–512–1800.

Daniel, Jerlean E. "Infants to Toddlers: Qualities of Effective Transitions." ***Young Children*** **(September 1993): 16–21.**

This article describes the infant-to-toddler transition and demonstrates how staff at one child care center put transition theory into practice. To order a copy, call the National Association for the Education of Young Children at: 1–800–424–2460.

Dodge, Diane T., and Laura J. Colker. ***The Creative Curriculum for Family Child Care.*** **Washington, DC: Teaching Strategies, Inc., 1991.**

This curriculum guide is for home providers. It delineates the social, emotional, and cognitive needs of children at different developmental stages and instructs providers on how to meet these needs through a carefully developed curriculum. Because home care involves multi-age grouping, the book gives examples of ways to include children of all ages in activities and includes suggestions for working with parents. To order a copy, call: 1–800–637–3652.

Dodge, Diane T., Judy R. Jablon, and Toni S. Bickart. "Welcoming Children to the Classroom Community." In ***Constructing Curriculum for the Primary Grades.*** **Washington, DC: Teaching Strategies, Inc., 1994.**

This curriculum guide offers primary school teachers concrete suggestions for designing a classroom setting that eases transition. To order a copy, call: 1–800–637–3652.

Evolson, Allana C. ***The Kindergarten Survival Handbook: The Before School Checklist & A Guide for Parents.*** **Santa Monica, CA: Parent Education Resources, 1993.**

This guide provides a checklist of the skills a child needs to be ready for kindergarten. It also offers parents tips for preparing their child for school. To order a copy, fax: 1–310–458–9758.

Fleck, Karen M. "Supporting the Transition to Elementary School." ***Principal Magazine*** **(May 1995): 25–27.**

This article describes how the Santa Clara County Head Start Transition Project has worked to facilitate early childhood transitions. Included are examples of successful practices. To request a copy, call: 1–800–386–2377.

Follman, Caroline. ***Forward to Sharing Success in the Southeast: Promising Practices in Preschool-to-School Transition.*** **Virginia: ERIC Document Reproduction Service, 1992.**

This document describes transition efforts in the Southeastern United States. It provides profiles on successful transition programs. Highlighted programs include: school district funded and administered; school-based programs that strengthen links between preschool and elementary school; and comprehensive preschools that strengthen links between social service providers and early intervention programs. Contact names are included. To order a copy, call: 1–800–443–3742.

Greene, Ed, Marilyn A. Jacobson, Jane Maehr, and Patricia P. Olmsted. "Reaching Out to Other Settings and Caregivers." In ***Supporting Young Learners, Ideas for Preschool and Day Care Providers.*** **Nancy Altman Brickman and Lynn Spencer Taylor, ed. Ypsilanti, MI: High/Scope Press, 1991.**

Chapter six in this book contains four articles that demonstrate the need for early childhood program staff to develop close ties with parents, other caregivers, and other community service providers. The first article, *Continuity: Building Bridges between Settings*, suggests ways for early childhood staff to build linkages between settings. The second and third articles, *Parent Involvement: It's Worth the Effort* and *Involving Busy Parents*, discuss how to enhance parent-staff relationships. The final article, *Kindergarten: Thorns in the Child's Garden?*, describes how to extend the High/Scope teaching method from preschool to kindergarten. To order a copy, call: 1–800–407–7377 or fax: 1–800–442–4329.

Resources

Hergert, Leslie F., Susan E. Mundry, Frances Arick Kolb, Raymond Rose, and Jo Corro. *Making Change for School Improvement.* Andover, MA: The Network, Inc., 1988. (Simulation game).

This *simulation game* is a training tool that provides players with an opportunity to learn about effective strategies for promoting positive changes in schools. Players role play and participate in team problem solving in order to simulate the process of organizational change. The game is based on educational research and includes a leader's manual that explains how to use the game as a training tool. For ordering information, call The Network, Inc., at 1–508–470–1080 or write them at 300 Brickstone Square, Suite 900, Andover, Massachusetts 01810.

Love, J.M., M.E. Logue, J.V. Trudeau, and K. Thayer. *Transitions to Kindergarten in American Schools.* Washington, DC: U.S. Department of Education, 1992.

This document is the final report of the National Transition Study. It describes the purpose, background, methodology, results, and implications for practice. An executive summary that includes highlights of the study is also available. To order a copy, request document ED344693 at: 1–800–443–3742.

Marcon, Rebecca A. "Fourth-Grade Slump: The Cause and Cure." *Principal Magazine* (May 1995): 17–20.

This article reviews the results of a study examining the difficult transition to upper elementary grades. It attributes *fourth-grade slump* to the overly academic emphasis of early childhood programs. The article makes the case that transitions are more successful when children are exposed to developmentally appropriate curricula in early education. To order a copy, call the National Association of Elementary School Principals at: 1–800–386–2377.

McCoy-Thompson, M., J. Vanneman, and F. Bloom. *The Healthy Start Initiative: A Community Driven Approach to Infant Mortality Reduction—Vol. II. Early Implementation: Lessons Learned.* Arlington, VA: National Center for Education in Maternal and Child Health, 1994.

This publication offers strategies for reducing infant mortality through a community approach. Examples of successful regional efforts are included. To order a copy, call: 1–703–821–8955 ext. 254 or fax: 1–703–821–2098.

Paulu, Nancy. ***Helping Your Child Get Ready for School.*** **Washington, DC: U.S. Department of Education, 1992. Wilma P. Green, ed.**

This Department of Education publication describes what it means to be ready for school and suggests age-appropriate activities for parents to initiate with their children. Also included are characteristics of children at different developmental stages and ways parents can support the needs of the developing child. To order a copy, request document CIC, 309B at: 1–800–424–1616.

Powell, Douglas R. ***Families and Early Childhood Programs.*** **Washington, DC: National Association for the Education of Young Children, 1989.**

This is a comprehensive review of research on family involvement in early childhood programs. Topics include the effects of continuity and discontinuity on children, parent education and support, opportunities for future research, and program planning. To order a copy, call: 1–800–424–2460.

Provence, Sally, Jeree Pawl, and Emily Fenichel, eds. ***The Zero to Three Child Care Anthology 1984–1992.*** **Washington, DC: ZERO TO THREE/National Center for Infants, Toddlers, and Families, 1992.**

This is a collection of essays that focus on infant and toddler care. The essays describe care options for children aged birth to three, care for infants and toddlers with special needs, and supports for child care programs and providers. It also includes a review of the research on infant/toddler care. To order a copy, call: 1–800–899–4301.

Regional Educational Laboratories. ***Continuity in Early Childhood: A Framework for Home, School, and Community Linkages.*** **Regional Educational Laboratories Early Childhood Collaboration Network, November 1995.**

This document describes a framework for providing continuity in early childhood education. It defines eight elements of continuity and provides an opportunity for communities to assess their own practices using the document as an assessment tool. To order a copy, contact your nearest Regional Educational Laboratory.

Resources

***Responding to Children under Stress: A Skill-based Training Guide for Classroom Teams.* Washington, DC: U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, 1994.**

This guide offers a staff development program that helps teachers support children who live in stressful environments. Eight two-hour sessions are included. Specific sessions include supporting parents, the daily schedule, routines, transitions, and the learning environment. To order a copy, write: Head Start Publication Management, P.O. Box 26417, Alexandria, VA 22313–0417 (HS2255) or fax: 1–703–683–5769.

Rosenkoetter, Sharon E., Ann H. Hains, and Susan A. Fowler. *Bridging Early Services for Children with Special Needs and Their Families: A Practical Guide for Transition Planning.* Baltimore, MD: Paul H. Brookes Publishing, 1994.

This book offers a variety of suggestions for helping young children with disabilities to transition to regular preschool or kindergarten programs. It spells out strategies and provides tools for planning and implementing effective transition practices. To order a copy, call 1–316–241–7754.

Seefeldt, Carol, and Barbara Warman. *Young and Old Together.* Washington, DC: National Association for the Education of Young Children, 1990.

This book provides guidelines for planning curriculum experiences for children aged three to eight that help children understand they are growing and changing. These activities can be useful in preparing children for transition and developing intergenerational programs. To order a copy, call: 1–800–424–2460.

Southern Regional Education Board (SREB). *Getting Schools Ready for Children: The Other Side of the Readiness Goal.* Atlanta, GA: SREB, 1994.

This document offers advice for teachers and administrators to help them get ready for children. Topics include curriculum and assessment, exclusion and retention, and parent involvement. Examples of successful projects are highlighted. To order a copy, write: SREB, 592 Tenth Street, NW, Atlanta, GA 30318–5790.

Stief, Elizabeth. *Transitions to School.* Washington, DC: National Governors Association, 1994.

This publication summarizes the need for transition activities; gives examples of state and local transition initiatives; and makes recommendations for future federal, state, and local transition assistance. To order a copy, call: 1–301–498–3738.

Three Feathers Associates and Oneida Transition Project. ***Building Bridges between Head Start and Kindergarten.*** **Norman, OK: Three Feathers Associates.**

This twenty-two-minute videotape illustrates a model for facilitating continuity between settings by networking and collaborating. It provides an overview of effective transition practices and specific strategies that programs can implement. For additional information, call 1–405–360–2919.

Washington, Valora, Valerie Johnson, and Janet Brown McCracken. ***Grassroots Success! Preparing Schools and Families for Each Other.*** **National Association for the Education of Young Children, 1995.**

This publication describes twenty W.K. Kellogg Foundation School Readiness Initiatives around the nation. It also suggests how schools can build partnerships with families and communities. Contact names and phone numbers are included. To order a copy, call: 1–800–424–2460.

Wolery, Mark and Jan S. Wilbers, eds. ***Including Children with Special Needs in Early Childhood Programs.*** **Washington, DC: National Association for the Education of Young Children, 1994.**

This book offers a review of current research and concrete suggestions for including children with special needs in early childhood programs. Chapters helpful to transition planners include *Working with Families of Children with Special Needs*, *Completing the Circle: Planning and Implementing Transitions to Other Programs*, and *Working with Members of Other Disciplines: Collaborations for Success*. To order a copy, call: 1–800–424–2460.

Wood, Chip. ***Yardsticks: Children in the Classroom, Ages 4–12.*** **Greenfield, MA: Northeast Foundation for Children, 1994.**

This book offers a comprehensive guide to child development. After a general introduction, each chapter covers a different age group, describes their developmental characteristics, and explains how the classroom environment can enhance their development. To order a copy, call: 1–800–360–6332.

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